NEA Today

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Jim and Susan Walker want to protect their family against skyrocketing health care bills. They also want to save for college. They can't afford both.

TOUGH CHOICES

A Special Issue on the Health Insurance Crisis

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Freeing Health Care from '80s Legacy

America's health care system is in critical condition. The symptoms are everywhere. And the symptoms are devastating.

Each year, one million families seek medical care only to be told—after a "wallet biopsy"—that they don't qualify for treatment.

Each year, 75,000 women receive prenatal care for the first time at the moment they enter the delivery room.

Each year, 40,000 babies die before reaching their first birthday.

Each year, a half-million children under the age of three go un-immunized against the most common childhood diseases.

Medicaid, the federal and state program that covers medical expenses for the indigent, now serves only 38 percent of the poor. As many as 37 million Americans have no health insurance.

The U.S. infant mortality rate is higher than Singapore's. The life expectancy of Americans is lower than the life expectancy of Cubans.

This cannot continue. We no longer have a health care delivery system; we have a health care rationing system. And the best rations are reserved for the rich.

Health care has become a luxury item. And the cost of this luxury is balanced on the backs of America's working men and women. (See cover story, pages 4 and 5.)

Today, what passes for creative health care financing is a vicious version of passing the buck, or more precisely, passing the bill.

All of this tells us that the decade of the 1980s is still with us. At the outset of that decade, we listened to a President who told us it was morning in America. Then we elected a President who spoke of a thousand points of light. And all the while, the darkness grew.

NEA President
Keith Geiger

More and more of our children live in this darkness. They are trapped in a cycle of deprivation. They are deprived of hope because they are deprived of an education.

They are deprived of an education because they are deprived of the health care that would make them physically, emotionally, and intellectually ready to learn.

What will become of them? To answer this question, we need only look at today's adolescents. They were toddlers when the federal policies that ripped the so-called safety net to shreds first took shape. The condition of the teens who grew up in the '80s is profiled in the 1990 Code Blue report of the National Commission on Adolescent Health.

The Code Blue document details an adolescent health crisis spinning out of control. It paints a vivid picture of teenagers caught in a spiral of declining academic achievement, declining physical health, declining emotional stability, declining hope.

Every sentence in the National Commission report tells us that the time has come for America's policymakers to get serious about the goal of student readiness for learning.

Right now, our health care system is making a mockery of that goal. It's making a farce of the President's 1990 education summit. And it's making victims of our children.

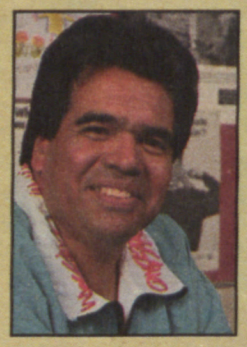
The adolescent health crisis reflects our national health crisis. It points to the inadequacy of prenatal health care and early childhood health care. In sum, it constitutes an indictment of federal policies that deny 12 million American youth access to comprehensive medical insurance coverage.

Dr. Birt Harvey, past president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, goes to the heart of the matter: "In other countries, children are considered a national resource....Support is given to children and families in the form of paid parental leave, child care, and—most importantly—comprehensive health care benefits."

Not so in America, adds Harvey. Not so in the America of the 1980s and '90s. Harvey describes America's child health care system as "unplanned, disorganized, and fragmented."

This is one part—perhaps the cruelest part—of the 1980s legacy that lives on in the federal priorities of 1991. It's time to erase that legacy. It's time for a kinder, gentler America.

And the place to begin is with a mammoth overhaul of health care—and health care financing. The place to begin is with a guarantee, to every American, that the right to the highest quality health care is a right that shall not be abridged or denied.



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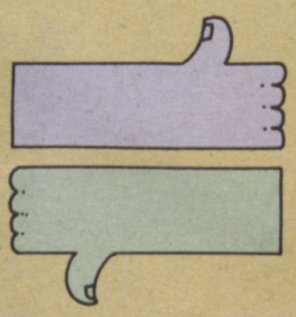

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NATIONAL NEWS

Without Federal Leadership States Left To Deal With

HEALTH CARE CRISIS

The national agenda is overcrowded with pressing issues—the Persian Gulf, the savings and loan calamity, the budget deficit, taxes. Meanwhile, states are setting their own health care policies—with mixed results for school employees.

It's no secret that the nation's health care costs are out of control—ballooning by more than 160 percent, from $240 billion to $640 billion, in just 10 years. But lack of national consensus on health insurance policy has shifted this monumental dilemma to statehouses across the country.

"We have to fight for health care reform wherever the action is," says John Dunlop, NEA's director for compensation and benefits. "If a national strategy isn't feasible, we have to refine our strategy for the states."

The health care crisis confronts Americans with two basic problems: how to protect the 37 million people who have no health insurance and how to stem the rising costs of health insurance without reducing benefits.

"We've got a savage battle going on in our state over these very issues," points out Massachusetts Teachers Association lobbyist Jack Flannagan.

The pressing need for health insurance reform among the states has created a cacophony of calls for greater access, equity, quality of care, and cost control. Here's how a few states have responded:

► *Massachusetts.* In 1988 Governor Michael Dukakis signed into law the Health Security Act, otherwise known as "universal health care." At issue is the so-called "play or pay" feature requiring employers to either insure their employees or pay a 12 percent surcharge on the first $14,000 of each employee's salary to a trust fund for uninsured employees. The catch: small businesses don't want to pay.

► *Oregon.* Debate continues over a recently adopted state plan to provide health care coverage to those who have no private insurance and aren't eligible for Medicaid. Source of the controversy: the state's decision to cut back on benefits while broadening access, which requires federal okay. Critics charge this combination "rations" health care.

► *Ohio.* In a radical departure from the current system of multiple independent insurers and insuring agents, an Ohio Education Association-backed plan proposes a Canadian-style health care system: a single-payer, free-choice system financed by a series of taxes and administered by an appointed Board of Governors.

► *California.* Two bills introduced in the last legislative year would require health care providers (hospitals, doctors, laboratories) to report the fees and types of procedures they perform. These bills are scheduled to be reintroduced.

► *New Mexico.* After years of rapid rises in health care expenses, in 1986 the state passed legislation authorizing a public school insurance authority, which runs the state's health insurance system for school employees. It's comprised of three representatives from education management and three from teachers unions. The new authority managed to cut premiums last year and stave off rises in other years. The result: New Mexico Education Association leaders are sold on the plan.

NEA's Dunlop summarizes the current outlook for better health coverage: "The states may be the seedbeds of reform nationally."

—Vicky Lytle

LOOKING AHEAD

► February 23 is the first anniversary of the creation of NEA's Center for Innovation. February 24 marks one year since the National Governors' Association adopted its ambitious 10-year goals for the nation's schools.

► An NEA national conference, "Education Support Personnel: Professional Partners for Tomorrow's Schools," will be held April 12-14 in Chicago. For information, write NEA Membership and Affiliates Division, NEA Center.

► NEA's second conference on "Advancing the National Education Goals" will be held April 19-21 in Pittsburgh. For the first time, NEA's spring conference will be open to the entire education community.

NEA Urges Mideast Peace

NEA Today went to press just at the January 15 deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

In the weeks before that deadline, NEA joined the National Council of Churches, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and a broad spectrum of other national groups to urge that economic sanctions "be given a chance to work."

The NEA Board of Directors, in a position statement adopted in December, noted NEA's grave concern about "the possibility of a permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East" and urged that the United States not initiate any offensive military action.

Moving In...

After abruptly squeezing out Lauro Cavazos in December, President Bush nominated former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander as education secretary.

Alexander, most recently president of the University of Tennessee, chaired the National Governors' Association in 1985-86.

"We had hoped ," NEA President Keith Geiger told the press, "that the President would select someone with classroom experience."

Geiger said NEA would "work cooperatively" with the new secretary despite previous disagreements on the federal role in education, merit pay, and public school choice.

...And Getting Out

Former Education Secretary William Bennett recently refused President Bush's nomination to head the Republican National Committee, apparently because the position didn't pay enough.

"Look," Bennett said, "I didn't take a vow of poverty, that's clear enough."

The RNC top slot pays $125,000 a year. Tax forms show Bennett earned nearly $500,000—from speaking fees and a book advance—in the first four months after leaving his education post.

Don't Cry, Dostoevsky

A *Los Angeles Times* article on the movement to equalize per-pupil spending brings us this gem from John Augenblieck, a Denver-based school finance consultant: "Changing school finance systems is a little like a Russian novel. It's long, it's boring, and in the end, everyone gets killed. For a legislator, this is a tough issue to deal with."

COVER STORY

TOUGH CHOICES

If we, as Americans, don't start making tough choices at the national level, your personal health insurance choices are sure to become even tougher—and more painful—than they already are.

The Walker family faces some difficult decisions, as health insurance costs climb.

Wayne Baranowski

Jim and Susan Walker teach in rural Illinois, about 100 miles south of Chicago. The cost of living there is low, salaries even lower. What's high in Wetseka, like everywhere else in the country, is the cost of health insurance.

Jim Walker, a 17-year economics and government teacher at Donovan High School, will earn $22,600 this year. Susan, a 19-year Chapter 1 remedial math and reading teacher in the Iroquois West School District, will earn $23,845.

Out of that combined income, the Walkers will pay nearly $3,000, after taxes, for family health insurance.

"I got a $1,007 raise this year," Jim says. "Out of that money, I ended up with $370 to spend. Uncle Sam took a chunk, and the state of Illinois took a chunk, but the insurance company got the biggest chunk—$384. It makes me feel like I'm working for them."

Nationally, average health insurance premiums run about $3,500 for families, $1,650 for individuals. Jim's district pays the cost of individual coverage. Those who need family coverage pay the difference between individual and family coverage themselves.

Since Jim's NEA local, the Donovan Education Association, signed a three-year contract in 1988, costs for family health insurance have gone up 65 percent.

For the Walkers, that hefty premium increase means less discretionary income and less money for the kids' college fund.

"With insurance rates going up the way they are, and college tuition going up the way it is, we're going to be hard pressed to pay for two kids, four years in college," Jim says.

"As teachers, we're extremely aware of the value of a college education. To think we may not be able to fund it as we'd planned all along...."

Jim Walker's voice trails off.

"I've seriously considered dropping my family insurance coverage and putting aside the money I'd save to gain interest. If I had to, I could use that money for medical bills," Jim explains.

"I've been honestly tempted to try that—but the 'what ifs' stop me. If something serious happened, we'd be in a world of hurt."

Still, Jim says, if costs keep climbing, he's prepared to make that choice, then "hope and pray everyone stays healthy."

One Local's Choice

Across the country, in the suburbs of Phoenix, Arizona, NEA members on the Glendale Union Education Association (GUEA) bargaining team were faced with a tough choice of their own.

The school district was holding firm: less than 4 percent raises, no higher. Association members—both teachers and support personnel—were holding firm, too. Some members were paying more than $3,000 a year for family health insurance, and they needed relief.

Confrontation seemed unavoidable. Then the GUEA team hit on what President Kathleen Adams calls "a nifty idea."

"We proposed a $1,100 flexible benefits package," explains Adams, an English teacher at Thunderbird High School. "Employees could use the money to help offset the cost of family premiums, save it for retirement, or take it in cash."

The school district accepted the pro-

COVER STORY

Edward McCain

Glendale teacher Kathleen Adams worries about the backlash from her local's flexible benefits package.

posal. So did GUEA members: coupled with the flexible benefits package, the small salary offer was acceptable.

For support employees, Adams notes, the contract brought the biggest increase in salary and benefits ever. For those paying for family coverage, the settlement was welcome relief.

Everyone seemed happy—until the media began calling the flexible benefits package a cash "bonus." Newspaper editorials, then local politicians, accused NEA members in Glendale of campaigning for more local school dollars—not for quality education, but for themselves.

"We were just massacred," Adams says.

"It'll hurt us in negotiations this year," Adams predicts. "There's too much political heat to even consider another flexible benefits package."

Fewer options, Adams notes, mean tougher choices ahead.

One State's Choice

Choices made by the Glendale Union Education Association affect more than 1,000 Phoenix-area educators. But choices made by three NEA members in Tennessee affect more than 20,000 education employees statewide.

Along with six other state leaders, the three teachers—all elected by fellow NEA members in Tennessee—are responsible for managing their state's educators' health insurance plan.

As a result of the five-year-old law creating the plan, the state pays 45 percent of the premium costs. Local school districts and NEA affiliates bargain over who'll pay the rest.

In a few areas, the school district pays the full 55 percent. In others, teachers and support employees pay the full amount—now $671 for single coverage and $1,676 for family. Some districts share the costs with their employees.

Allen Little, a world history and mathematics teacher at North Junior High School in Winchester, was elected to the statewide health insurance governing board soon after it was created.

This year, Little and his colleagues on the board faced one of their toughest choices. Costs had skyrocketed. Without action by the governing board and more money from the state, Tennessee's educators were looking at a 60 percent increase in their share of premium costs.

So board members acted. They voted to switch insurance carriers to the Tennessee Provider Network, a "preferred provider" option that controls costs by using only doctors and hospitals that offer discounted prices.

State legislators agreed to put in an additional $5 million just to keep the state's contribution at 45 percent.

And the board agreed to a 15 percent premium increase for educators.

How does Little feel, as an Association advocate, sharing responsibility for increasing costs to members?

"I don't feel bad about it," he answers. "I'm glad we were there to make that choice. It could have been made for us, and it could have been far more costly to us. At least we had a voice in it.

"We have to manage the program to keep it sound," Little adds. "If we don't, the benefit's gone."

Alex McMahan

Tennessee teacher Allen Little sits on the state's health cost control panel.

Our Nation's Choice

Families, locals, state insurance board representatives—all are making tough choices, trying to make the best of a bad situation. But are we, as a nation, willing to make tough choices, too?

If we do nothing, health care costs will continue to spin out of control. Despite America's huge outlay for health care, 25 percent of all Americans will still not receive the medical care they need because they can't afford it. And choices made at kitchen table and bargaining table will continue to get tougher.

Many Americans believe there are lessons to be learned from the choices Canadians have made over the last 30 years. Their health insurance program—which started in one province, then expanded to all 10—provides universal coverage to all 26 million Canadians.

Canada's health insurance program is funded by taxes and administered by the provincial governments. Doctors bill the provincial health ministry, not the patient. Hospitals negotiate their budgets with the government.

No Canadian is denied care. But Canadians sometimes wait in line for the care they need. For cardiac surgery or the use of new medical technology, the waiting can last for months.

It's a trade-off, but one Canadians are willing to make. They spend only 9 percent of their GNP on health care, compared to our 12 percent. Because there's a single payer instead of 1,500 insurance companies (as there are here), Canadians save on administrative costs. Overall, their per capita health costs are about *40 percent* lower than ours.

"The Canadian system raises critical questions for us," says NEA Compensation and Benefits Director John Dunlop. "Do we want to expand coverage for everybody so all have access to quality medical care—and accept some inconveniences?

"Or do we want to maintain a system that isn't inconvenient for the economically well-off, but doesn't cover the poor and a portion of the middle class?"

Finding an acceptable solution—one that expands access and controls costs—is a top NEA priority. But, Dunlop warns, there are no easy answers on any level.

"As Association members," Dunlop says, "we must remember that health insurance is a group benefit, not an individual benefit. In our zeal to provide greater benefits for individuals, we need to avoid pitting single members against those with families or active members against retirees.

"Even more important," he continues, "we need to begin to see health care coverage not just as a labor/management issue, but as a community concern. And we need to join with other unions and advocacy organizations also working to protect that interest."

Nationally, NEA is an active member of Jobs With Justice, a coalition of unions and public interest groups working to put the health care crisis on the front burner of federal legislative activities.

Last October 3, at some 50,000 work locations, millions of people took part in Jobs With Justice-sponsored rallies, meetings, informational picketing—all demanding national health care reform.

New actions on behalf of health care reform are now in the works.

"If you've got good benefits now—or you know someone who does—fight to preserve them. And if you don't have good benefits, fight to get them," NEA's John Dunlop concludes. "But recognize both courses will mean tough choices."

—Stefanie Weiss

How Bad Is It?

The health insurance crisis in the United States is so bad that:

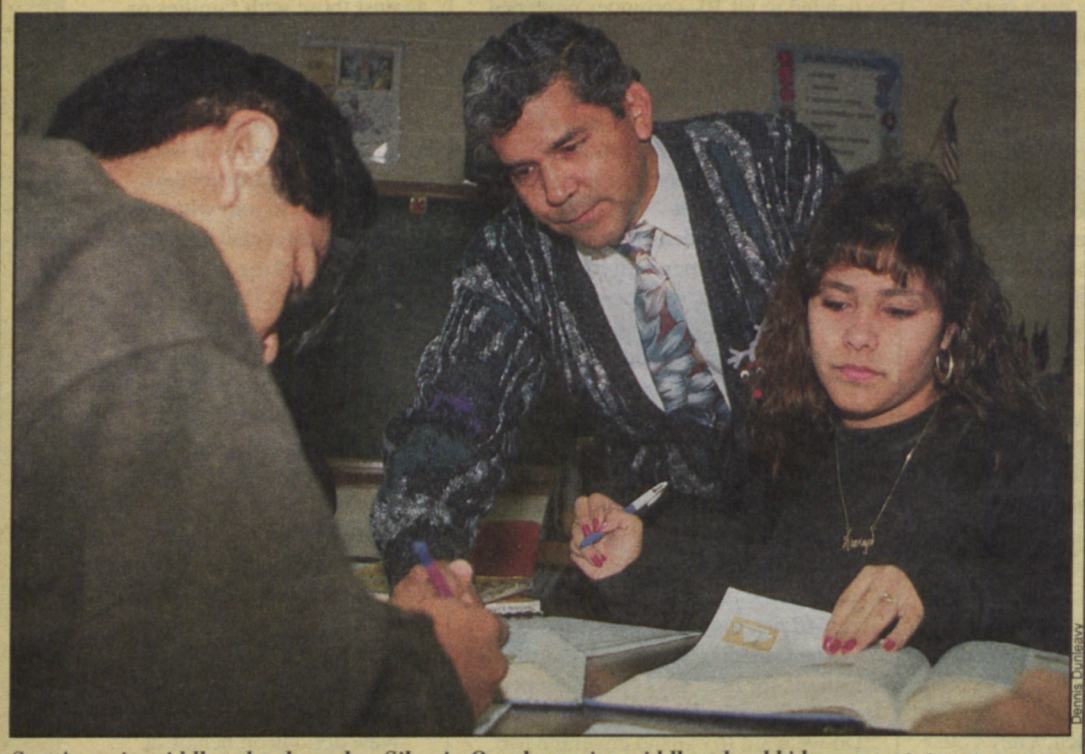
- Over 31 million Americans—28 percent of whom are children—have no health insurance at all. Another 25 million are underinsured.
- The United States and South Africa are the only two developed nations in the world that don't provide access to health care for all their citizens.
- The nation's medical bill for 1990 was about $650 billion—or $1.7 million a minute. Health care costs account for nearly 12 percent of current GNP.
- Despite the highest per-person health expenditure in the world, the United States ranks 12th in life expectancy, 21st in the survival rate of children under age 5, and 18th (or worse, depending on the source) in controlling infant mortality.
- In 1987, one out of eight educators had to pay part of their health insurance premium. Now it's one out of three.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Reducing Dropout:

Take a Chance on Peers

A San Antonio teacher finds that when one at-risk student tutors another, potential dropouts become successful students.



San Antonio middle school teacher Silverio Ornelas trains middle school kids as peer tutors to younger students. Results show that both elementary and middle school students benefit.

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that in 1989, 33 percent of Hispanics aged 16-24 dropped out of school.

The International Development Research Group (IDRA), a small advocacy group, estimates that in Texas, the Hispanic dropout rate among students in grades 9-12 is 48 percent; in San Antonio, it's 47 percent.

These high rates might discourage any educator who's working to lower the dropout odds. But they haven't stopped Silverio Ornelas, a San Antonio social studies teacher. Last year Ornelas took a chance on peer tutoring.

Ornelas selected 26 middle school students who were frequently absent and at least a year behind in reading—two signs that a student may not finish school. He paired these youngsters with elementary students who were having trouble in school. Then he trained the older students to tutor the younger ones, paying them minimum-wage stipends from federal funds set up for this purpose.

A year later, none of the tutors have dropped out. Both tutors and tutees have improved their basic skills, attendance, and grades and have developed a love for school. And other teachers—including some who wondered why Ornelas rewarded the children who had the worst school attitudes—now praise their colleague's work.

Ornelas' program was part of the Valued Youth Program, piloted by IDRA in 1984. The original funding came from Coca-Cola USA.

Since then, 650 middle school students have helped themselves and their communities by tutoring 2,000 elementary students in five school districts in San Antonio and McAllen, Texas.

The teacher's role in the program is a large one. When Ornelas joined the program at Leal Middle School, he conducted classes for the student tutors and supervised their tutoring sessions at nearby Collier Elementary.

He organized the tutors into a supportive club and arranged for them to decorate halls and bulletin boards and design spirit posters for ball games. On Saturdays, he used his van to take the students on field trips to museums and art galleries.

Ornelas also worked with the students' parents. He made home visits and organized parent workshops about motivation, nutrition, stress management, and teen health. And he led discussions on how to resolve disagreements about music, personal appearance, and schoolwork.

"I give the students all the time I can," Ornelas says, "because I was one of those kids 30 years ago." A 16-year teacher, Ornelas is a past president of the Southside Teachers Association.

"My family was very poor, and I didn't learn English until the second grade. If it weren't for my seventh grade history teacher, who taught me how to read, I would have dropped out.

"I have a happy professional life because of one teacher," says Ornelas, "and I want to give that gift back to my students. I hope they will do the same."

The San Antonio program at Leal Middle School is now supported by federal Title VII (bilingual education) funds. Next year, with support from the Coca-Cola foundation, IDRA will implement its own cross-age peer tutoring program in California, Florida, and New York.

For more information about peer-tutoring programs, write to the Valued Youth Program, Intercultural Development Research Association, 5835 Callaghan, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228.

—Mary Faber
NEA Human and Civil Rights

WASHINGTON WATCH

Toward Healthy Legislation

TOUGH CHOICES

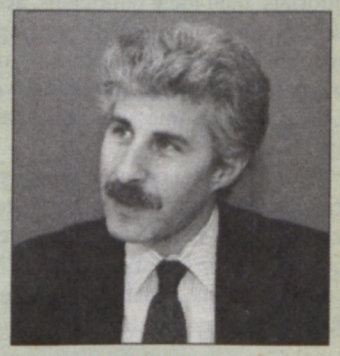
NEA's been working for decades to enact a comprehensive program of national health care legislation. Michael Edwards, NEA's manager of Congressional relations, explains why it's taking so long and what's ahead.

Why is health care such an important part of the NEA legislative program?
Health care is as substantial an issue as Congress will ever contend with. It affects every one of us, from before birth to death. It can make the difference between a comfortable life and a miserable one—and for millions of Americans today, it *is* making that difference.

Perhaps, historically, you could compare comprehensive health care legislation with the creation of Social Security during the New Deal. Health care, unfortunately, still remains on the legislative agenda.

Why has it been so hard to get a program passed?
First, the issue is complicated—an incredible number of policy options exist.

Second, the legislation would be costly. Our health care system is the most expensive in the world—and given the deficit, funds are tight.



NEA's Michael Edwards

Third, there's a conflict among the interests. Health care is big money and big business.

How does Congress respond?
Unfortunately, when issues appear costly, complex, and conflicted, Congress responds by moving on to another subject.

Who are the key players on this issue?
On our side, unions, advocacy groups, and some corporate leaders. On the other side, the U.S. Chamber of Congress, the American Medical Association, and insurance companies, among others. We need to reach consensus with those who are on our side so that we're speaking with one voice.

What's pending?
Two things: the Pepper Commission recommendations, which guarantee access to health care for all Americans and provide a new program of long-term care for the chronically ill. And the Kennedy-Waxman bill, which would begin to cover some of the millions of uninsured Americans.

What's coming up?
More focused debate and possibly new bills. One of our goals is to make health insurance a key issue in the 1992 presidential race. We recognize that national health insurance legislation could be many years away. But we don't think the nation is well served by waiting.

Local Look

MONTANA

Talent Unlimited

Mention the Billings Education Association to anyone who lives within a couple hundred miles of its home turf, and you'll probably get an enthusiastic response that may have nothing to do with education.

That's because Association members' talents aren't limited to school matters. BEA's annual November holiday fair has carried its name far and wide.

Displayed on the fair's 150 tables is the artistry of active and retired Association members from districts as far as 130 miles away. Crowds jostle to buy handmade dolls, clothing, decorative items, paintings, photographs, woodwork, and baked goods.

BEA initiated the fair 15 years ago to heal wounds between teacher and community factions brought on by a bitter 18-day strike. The fair's been so successful that today many would-be exhibitors are turned away for lack of space.

The fair is nonprofit, explains BEA President Steve Henry. Participants pay a nominal fee, and there's a raffle for the public. Any balance goes into a scholarship fund, which this year will provide five local high school students with $500 each toward college expenses.

NEW JERSEY

ESP, Teachers Unite For Great Contract

"There's no doubt in my mind," says Frank Davis. "Had we not been united, both support staff and teachers would have been on strike." But the support staff and teachers in New Jersey's Lower Camden County Regional High School District *were* united in one Association (headed by Davis, a teacher).

Instead of ending with a strike, collective bargaining resulted in the highest support staff and teachers pay settlements in the county last year.

Unification began in 1986, when two NJEA affiliates, serving custodians and teachers, decided to merge. Secretaries and aides signed on, too. The result was a local of some 200 support staff and 450 teachers.

The new three-year contract is divided into provisions that differ for certificated and noncertificated staff (work rules, vacations, absences, salaries, hours) and those that cover both (grievance procedures, leaves, health benefits).

Pay increases average over 10 percent for each of the next three years.

IN BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN

Robert Chase

Business teacher Stephanie Lee and counselor Joe Permelia meet with a few of their W. K. Kellogg Junior High School students—some of whom may be Battle Creek's future teachers.

Schools Develop Minority Teachers

Enough talk about the need for more minority teachers in the classroom. Members of Michigan's Battle Creek Education Association are doing something about it.

They're using local ingredients to produce some high-quality colleagues themselves.

Battle Creek teachers and counselors started the ball rolling recently by selecting five promising minority ninth graders interested in teaching as a career.

With help from local Urban League mentors, supportive parents, and Association members, the five students will prepare to go to college.

When the students graduate from high school—with at least B averages—Western Michigan University will provide scholarships. "University mentors" will help and encourage them along their chosen career path.

Finally, when these young people have graduated from college and obtained certification, the Battle Creek school system will interview them and hire those qualified. If there aren't enough openings in Battle Creek, the school system will help them get jobs nearby.

"We have a lot of involvement from important segments of the community," says Sheila Smith, chair of the local's minority concerns committee and a sixth grade teacher at Urbandale Elementary. "And a lot of commitment."

BCEA President Marijean Silver, an elementary art and music teacher at Level Park Elementary, looks forward to having more minority role models in Battle Creek's schools.

"We have too many students who may settle for something less than a college degree," Silver says. "We want them to know they can do whatever they set out to do."

NEA recently selected the Battle Creek program—"Our Minority Students Becoming Our Future Teachers"—as one of 12 winners of $3,000 urban grants (see page 39 for a complete listing).

ALABAMA

Mobile Local Aims To Help Parents

The Mobile County Education Association (MCEA), working with the Alabama Education Association (AEA), is hosting five parental involvement workshops from now through April. Each five-hour program will bring together 50 community members.

The workshop offers ideas that parents can use at home to prepare kids to succeed in school. Teachers can reinforce each activity in the classroom.

MCEA is encouraging workshop participants to duplicate the training program in their own school or their community.

"We're hoping these workshops will help parents become more involved in the education of their child—from cradle to college," says MCEA President Tonia "Cherry" Eason.

MARYLAND

Caring for Kids

For some students, school work is the least of their worries.

They often don't have food to eat, clothing to wear, or school supplies to use.

Since 1977, the Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO) has reached out to such children in need with donations from its KidCare Fund. KidCare is a year-round program that helps youngsters who need clothing, medical supplies, food—anything—to make school attendance possible.

Teachers and education support personnel donate to the fund in cash or through payroll deductions. Any TABCO member who identifies a child in need can call the KidCare Fund at the TABCO office, describe the child's situation, and ask for a donation.

KidCare has provided everything from drumsticks so a child can play in the school band to a warm winter coat in December. At the beginning of each school year, KidCare provides a number of students with school supplies.

TEXAS

McAllen Board Gets 'Basics' Training

In Texas, where collective bargaining for public employees is still illegal, ESP members of the McAllen Local Unit want the same rights as their teacher colleagues have. Their first success: a consultation committee.

"I suggested to the board that a consultation committee meeting with management could resolve 90 percent of ESP grievances—just as it does teachers' grievances," says Hector Loya, TSTA UniServ rep. "The board doesn't have to handle every ESP grievance itself."

The McAllen board agreed to the consultation committee. The ESP will name both members and chair. Now ESP are working on another key item the teachers already have: the right to appeal management decisions from the superintendent.

TOUGH CHOICES

State Side

ARIZONA

Want Help with Math? Press '5'...

For two hours every school night, Phoenix-area students with a homework question can use their digital phones to dial up a teacher in the right subject, at the right level.

And teachers can work the Homework Hotline from their own homes without having to make their own phone numbers or even their names public—unless they choose to.

The Phoenix Homework Hotline, sponsored jointly by the Arizona Education Association, station KTSP-TV, and the local Coca-Cola bottler, uses KTSP's CityLine computer to make the connection between kids and teachers.

Kids phone a special Hot Line number, respond digitally to some routing questions, and are forwarded to an appropriate teacher.

CONNECTICUT

Stopping the State

For five minutes last fall, the state of Connecticut came to a stop—and the Connecticut Education Association had a hand in the shutdown.

"A Moment of Consciousness," sponsored by "Drugs Don't Work: the Governor's Partnership to Prevent Substance Abuse," halted enterprises statewide from 10:55 to 11 o'clock on the morning of October 25.

CEA sent out a call to locals to mobilize schools. "We gave the kids contracts making a commitment 'to help myself or another person lead a drug-and alcohol-free life,'" says Gary Lebeau, East Hartford's coordinator for drug-free schools. "This was a commitment the kids made to themselves."

ARKANSAS

Campaigning for Salary Equity

The Arkansas Education Association is making an all-out effort to raise teaching salaries and achieve parity with its six bordering states.

In 1984-85, Arkansas teachers were paid $2,217 below the average in the surrounding states. AEA now estimates the salary gap is $4,486—16.3 percent below the average of the surrounding states. Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton has pledged to raise salaries 10 percent for each of the next two years.

Last month AEA kicked off its campaign with a massive rally at the state capitol.

HEALTH CARE COSTS

How Does Your State Compare?

Health care spending increased by whopping margins over the past 10 years—in some states more than others. Expect more of the same in the next 10.

On average, per capita health care spending rose from $1,016 to $2,425—138.7 percent—between 1980 and 1990. The expected average increase between 1990 and 2000 is 127 percent. Expenditures could reach $5,515 per person.

PER CAPITA HEALTH SPENDING
1980-2000

STATE	1980	1990	% Change 1980-1990	% Change Rank	2000	% Change 1980-2000
ALABAMA	924	2,286	147.4%	13	5,201	462.8%
ALASKA	921	2,367	157.2%	2	5,390	485.5%
ARIZONA	848	2,211	160.7%	1	5,031	493.0%
ARKANSAS	844	1,944	130.4%	46	4,423	424.1%
CALIFORNIA	1,186	2,894	143.9%	17	6,584	454.9%
COLORADO	996	2,415	142.5%	20	5,496	451.8%
CONNECTICUT	1,148	2,699	135.2%	39	6,136	434.7%
DELAWARE	960	2,268	136.3%	36	5,160	437.6%
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	1,241	2,586	108.4%	51	5,882	374.1%
FLORIDA	962	2,427	152.3%	3	5,520	473.7%
GEORGIA	883	2,072	134.7%	40	4,714	434.0%
HAWAII	993	2,469	148.5%	9	5,619	465.6%
IDAHO	708	1,726	143.9%	18	3,928	455.0%
ILLINOIS	1,093	2,619	139.6%	29	5,953	444.6%
INDIANA	919	2,201	139.4%	30	5,004	444.3%
IOWA	993	2,351	136.6%	35	5,343	437.9%
KANSAS	1,057	2,548	141.1%	22	5,792	448.0%
KENTUCKY	806	1,875	132.5%	43	4,266	429.1%
LOUISIANA	940	2,185	132.4%	44	4,972	428.9%
MAINE	870	2,175	150.0%	5	4,945	468.5%
MARYLAND	1,041	2,436	134.1%	42	5,541	432.5%
MASSACHUSETTS	1,284	3,031	136.0%	38	6,890	436.5%
MICHIGAN	1,097	2,569	134.3%	41	5,840	432.5%
MINNESOTA	1,110	2,480	123.4%	49	5,641	408.1%
MISSISIPPI	759	1,751	130.6%	45	3,984	424.6%
MISSOURI	1,033	2,568	148.6%	8	5,837	465.1%
MONTANA	859	2,059	139.7%	27	4,686	445.6%
NEBRASKA	1,016	2,452	141.4%	21	5,576	448.8%
NEVADA	1,109	2,757	148.5%	10	6,272	465.3%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	813	1,981	143.6%	19	4,505	453.8%
NEW JERSEY	930	2,224	139.2%	32	5,056	443.8%
NEW MEXICO	711	1,792	152.2%	4	4,078	473.9%
NEW YORK	1,257	2,818	124.2%	48	6,408	409.8%
NORTH CAROLINA	773	1,833	137.1%	34	4,170	439.5%
NORTH DAKOTA	1,066	2,661	149.7%	6	6,051	467.6%
OHIO	1,039	2,493	140.0%	26	5,667	445.6%
OKLAHOMA	906	2,139	136.2%	37	4,867	437.3%
OREGON	940	2,312	146.0%	15	5,260	459.8%
PENNSYLVANIA	1,021	2,536	148.3%	11	5,763	464.2%
RHODE ISLAND	1,184	2,707	128.6%	47	6,153	419.7%
SOUTH CAROLINA	706	1,689	139.2%	31	3,842	444.4%
SOUTH DAKOTA	952	2,322	144.0%	16	5,278	454.7%
TENNESSEE	952	2,262	137.7%	33	5,145	440.8%
TEXAS	915	2,192	139.7%	28	4,987	445.3%
UTAH	741	1,784	140.8%	23	4,062	448.0%
VERMONT	815	1,956	140.1%	25	4,448	445.9%
VIRGINIA	863	2,076	140.5%	24	4,724	447.2%
WASHINGTON	929	2,311	148.7%	7	5,258	466.0%
WEST VIRGINIA	843	2,088	147.6%	12	4,752	463.4%
WISCONSIN	1,097	2,449	123.2%	50	5,567	407.3%
WYOMING	714	1,756	146.1%	14	3,996	460.0%
U.S. AVERAGE	$1,016	$2,425	138.7%		$5,515	442.8%

SOURCE: Lewin/ICF estimates

WEST VIRGINIA

Renewing the Fight

A bookkeeping error has sent the West Virginia Education Association back into the fight for affordable health care.

WVEA won a big victory last year when the Public Employee Insurance Agency (PEIA) Finance Board agreed to implement a long-range plan to ease the agency's problems with the high cost of health care.

By creating an $11 million surplus, the plan would have virtually eliminated the need for public employees to pay health care premiums.

But the plan hit a snag when a $20 million bookkeeping error—which caused inaccurate figures to be passed on to the finance board—was found.

"WVEA had exhausted every avenue of relief in our efforts to achieve our goal of no premiums," says WVEA President Kayetta Meadows. "But how could anyone have come up with a workable solution when faulty figures were provided?"

INDIANA

Affiliate Creates 'Classroom of Future'

On the second floor of its Indianapolis office building, the Indiana State Teachers Association has created a technology-rich, model classroom for the future.

It's got computers, printers, modems, a TV and VCR, a compact photocopying machine, over 100 software programs—even a telephone on the teacher's desk.

ISTA President Garrett Harbron says the new lab "will serve as a demonstration and training facility for our members. Teachers can come in and try out the equipment, train on the software, even bring in classes for field trips."

IBM and other businesses donated the equipment to ISTA.

HAWAII

Higher Salaries?

Teachers in the 50th state cheered recently when legislators lowered requirements for the highest rank on their salary schedule. Effective next September, teachers will no longer need a doctorate to achieve top pay.

But elation turned to frustration when the state school superintendent said he didn't favor making the change retroactive. Retroactivity would cost the state $9 million.

The 14,000-member Hawaii State Teachers Association lobbied for the change with the understanding that it would be retroactive. HSTA's next aim is to convince legislators to make it so.

Retroactivity would place 40 percent of Hawaii's teachers in the highest classification, increasing annual salaries by $2,000-$3,000 each.

Meet:

Danny Drake

Critic of Health 'Unsurance'

Canadians are said to have such complete health insurance coverage that they never see, much less pay, a medical bill. Yet they'll come to the U.S. and pay out-of-pocket for, say, an MRI scan.

Most Americans would prefer a system like Canada's—with everyone covered under a single plan—according to a recent poll. Yet most Americans don't fully understand the tradeoffs that could entail.

Recently NEA Today *staff writer Nancy Needham discussed these issues with Uwe Reinhardt, James Madison Professor of Political Economy at Princeton University. Reinhardt, a noted critic of the American health insurance system, has a special interest in the study of comparative health insurance systems.*

You seem appalled by U.S. health insurance.
It really isn't "insurance" anymore. Somebody called it "*un*surance." It's coverage you can lose—by losing your job, or by having your rates upped so far that your employer can no longer afford to offer you coverage.

Also, with so many different plans, U.S. health insurance is complicated and expensive to administer. What we need most critically is to streamline our insurance system into something that people can understand and rely on.

Like Canada's and Germany's?
Yes. In Canada the provincial governments provide health insurance, and people belong to the system just by living in the province. It's paid for generally by the income tax.

In Germany people belong to the same sickness fund whether they're working, unemployed, or retired. The premium comes out of their paycheck, unemployment check, or pension check.

How did the U.S. get job-tied health insurance?
From efforts to evade World War II wage controls. During the war, unions and management invented a new fringe benefit called health insurance, which didn't count as wages.

Group health insurance grew from there. No one ever thought about the wisdom of tying an entire family's health insurance to a particular job. You would never design such a system from scratch.

Why hasn't Medicaid filled in as intended to cover the poor?
Because there's no uniformity in Medicaid coverage—it's determined by the states. In Mississippi a family with an income over $3,000 is too "rich" to qualify. In New York or Massachusetts, the threshold is $9,000.

The result is that less than half the children in poverty are covered by Medicaid. That's one problem. The other problem is that even those with Medicaid don't get access to doctors because the fees Medicaid pays are so low that doctors won't accept Medicaid patients. What kind of insurance is this?

But the uninsured do get some medical care here. How much?
They get hospital care as charity patients when they're really sick. What they don't get is preventive care or less-than-critical care.

The hospital passes the cost on to the paying patients, who pay—or whose insurance companies pay—more than they otherwise would. It's called cost shifting.

Couldn't we make Medicaid pay the real amount and cover everyone not in a private plan?
We could fuse Medicaid with Medicare. That would take the states out and make the federal government responsible for the health care of both the old and the poor.

But we wouldn't have a "national health plan"?
No, that would take one additional element: more regulation of the private insurance system. Congress would have to mandate that every employer offer a minimum health insurance plan to all employees. Not all employers do so now.

Then we'd have "universal"—but not completely government-run—health insurance.

Will Congress pass such a plan?
Perhaps. The key players will be under pressures that may lead them to want comprehensive change. For example, health care providers—hospitals and doctors—will continue to try to raise charges to paying customers.

This will put pressure on insurance companies to raise premiums. But large employers have clout in the medical insurance market. They'll be able to negotiate discounts in the employee premiums they pay.

Small employers, on the other hand, don't have market clout. They'll get bigger increases in their premiums.

Like small school districts?
Yes. Small employers are the victims of cost shifting—this time, of administrative costs, from larger to smaller employers. Administrative costs become an increasingly large portion of their ever-larger health insurance premiums. Eventually the high premiums will force the small employers to drop their insurance coverage.

You think all this will cause Congress to step in?
Yes. The federal government is facing a $300-to-$400 billion deficit. So Congress has more reason than ever to do something about rising Medicare-Medicaid expenditures. When small employers tell Congress they want to pay the same premium per employee as big business, Congress may be ready to act. Because to bring about equality between big and small employers there'll have to be federal regulation of private plans.

What mandates should a federal health insurance law include?
Any national health care law will have to require three items. First, open enrollment: everyone, regardless of health status, must be insurable.

Second, community-rated rather than experience-rated premiums. Premiums should be based on geography—the same across a state or metropolitan area, say—rather than on the risk status of the specific employees in the plan.

Third, an all-payer system. Every insurance carrier must pay the same hospital and doctor fees for the same service; there'll be no more discounts.

Will there be costs to patients, such as delayed treatment?
The U.S. won't be able to support the excess capacity we have now. Hospitals have, on average, a 60 percent occupancy rate. This makes for a high price per unit and high charges. When that excess capacity is done away with, there may be some queuing for nonemergency treatment, as in Canada.

Would you feel safe personally under, say, the Canadian system—if there were no U.S. system to turn to?
Yes. I might have to queue for a coronary bypass. But I'd never go bankrupt, never worry about losing insurance coverage.

But I don't think this country needs to go the Canadian route. With private insurance regulated, we can convert that system from health "unsurance" to genuine health insurance.

TRENDS

Smoke-Free Schools? Not Quite

Ninety-five percent of the nation's school districts restrict tobacco smoking in schools, reports the National School Boards Association (NSBA) in a national survey of school district non-smoking policies. Nearly one district in five—17 percent—now bans smoking entirely.

The survey shows more restrictions on cigarettes than in the past. And with growing restrictiveness has come better compliance by students. Nearly 50 percent of districts report excellent compliance in 1989, compared with 33 percent in 1986.

Copies of the report, entitled "Smoke-Free Schools: A Progress Report," are available for $3 from the NSBA's Center for Federation Member Relations, State Legislation and Public Policy, 1680 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

Minority Success: A New Angle

If we look beyond the triangles and T-squares, high school geometry may be what's known as a "gatekeeper" course, according to a recent College Board study.

That is, the course is considered the single most important predictor of minority participation in college. Minority students who took a year or more of high school geometry were significantly more likely to earn a college degree in four years.

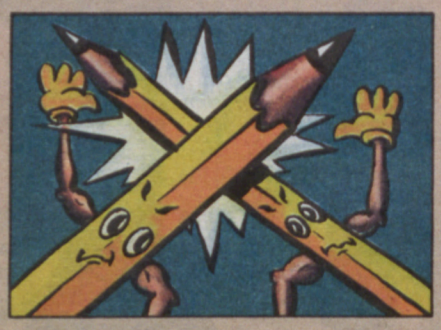
In their report, "Changing the Odds: Factors Increasing Access to College," the researchers estimate the odds are 1 in 40 of an African-American student making it to a fourth year in college without high school geometry. For Hispanic youth, the odds drop to 1 in 60.

Kids and Sports: Thumbs Up

A survey of 645 families by *USA Today* and NBC revealed a wellspring of healthy, positive, sports-loving attitudes among the younger generation. At the same time, the poll shows that sports competition can lead to worry and sleeplessness, poor sportsmanship, and injuries.

Despite charges that we're raising a generation of couch potatoes, nearly two-thirds of those polled say their children are more involved in sports than they were. And 86 percent say their children are just as fit as they themselves were in their youth—or even fitter.

What's the Point?



Remember those big fat pencils you used to get at school when you were very young? They may have felt good to wrap your fingers around, but researchers say youngsters can get comfortable with pencils of any width.

Research results show a positive relationship between a child's handling of a pencil and writing or drawing performance, but it doesn't have anything to do with the pencil's diameter. Some pencil manufacturers have been pushing the old-fashioned, wide-diameter models ever since the 1920s.

New findings published in *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* conclude: "Research has produced no evidence that it is a particular advantage to have preschoolers use large-diameter pencils exclusively."

Portrait of the Eighth Grader

When a long-awaited study of 3 million eighth graders was released last fall, socioeconomics were shown to play a big role in determining levels of achievement.

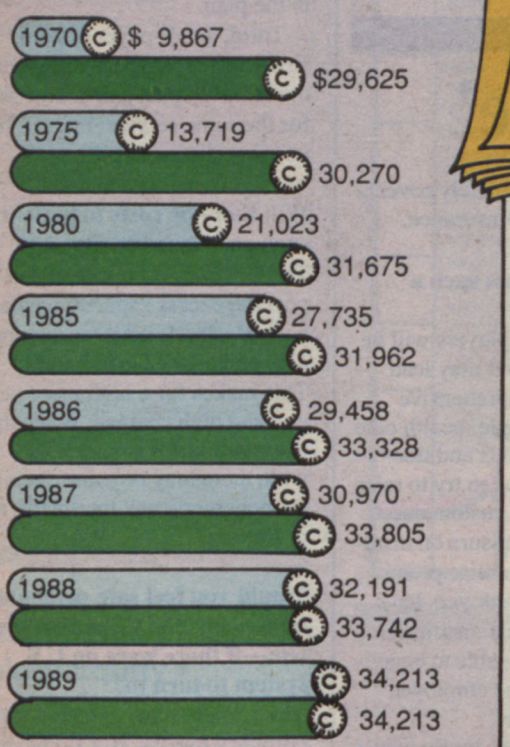
The study, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, showed that family income level was the single biggest predictor of whether a student was taking a foreign language, an advanced math course, and a science course with a laboratory. The more wealthy the family, the more likely a student was to be enrolled in those courses.

This and a lot more about 1988's eighth graders (they're now in high school) is contained in the study, "A Profile of the American Eighth Grader," available for $9 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325. Stock number 065-000-00404-6.

DATA BANK

Small Change

Subtract inflation, and median family income has only gone up 15 percent in the last 19 years. For those with math anxiety, that's less than one percent a year.



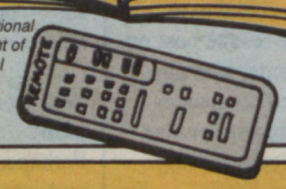
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. News and World Report

Distractions?

A 1988 federal government survey of nearly 25,000 eighth graders uncovers a bit of a priority problem.

Average number of hours spent per week
Doing homework 5.7 Hours
Doing outside reading 1.8 Hours
Watching television 21.7 Hours

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress



As Time Goes By

If the U.S. is to be first in the world in science achievement, as President Bush and the nation's governors want, there will have to be significant changes in the way time is allocated.

Minutes a day spent teaching...	K-3	4-8
...Reading	77	63
...Mathematics	43	52
...Social studies	18	33
...Science	18	29

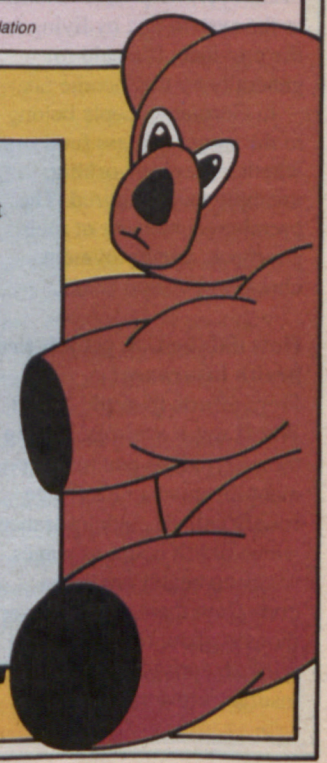
Source: The National Science Foundation

Infant Mortality

Worldwide, the U.S. ranks first in health spending, eighteenth in checking infant mortality.

	Infant deaths per 1,000 live births					
Japan	5	Norway	8	Austria	8
Finland	6	Denmark	8	Australia	9
Sweden	6	France	8	U.K.	9
Ireland	7	Hong Kong	8	Singapore	9
Switzerland	7	Netherlands	8	Spain	9
Canada	7	Germany	8	United States	10

Source: UNICEF, State of the World's Children, 1988.

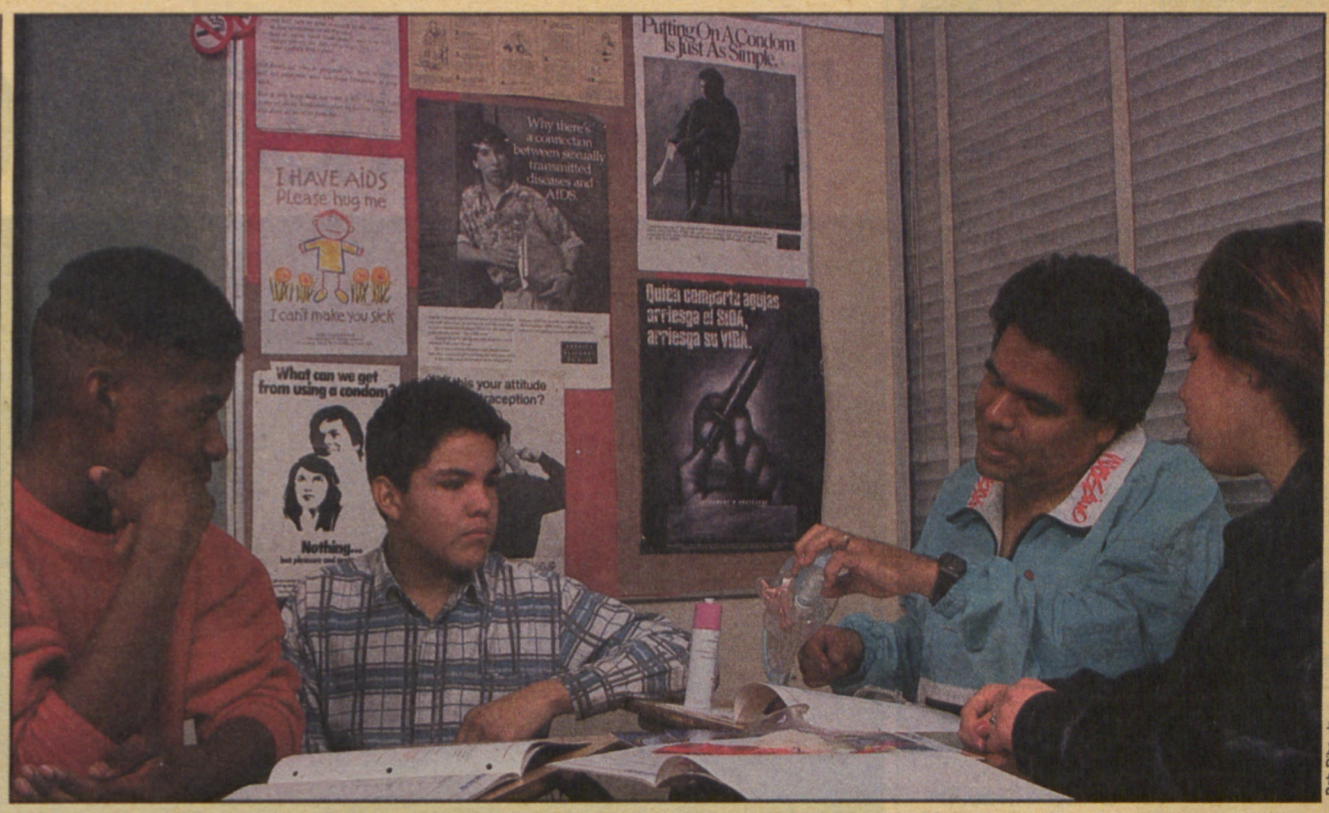


IN THE CLASSROOM

TOUGH CHOICES

HARD LESSONS TO TEACH

Whether you teach English or science, to second graders or high school seniors, chances are that sooner or later you'll have to talk to your students about HIV and AIDS. Here are some words of advice from members who've been there.


I HAVE AIDS
Please hug me
I can't make you sick
Why there's a connection between sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS
Putting On A Condom is Just As Simple.
What can we get from using a condom?
Nothing...
Quizá comparta agujas arriesga el SIDA, arriesga su VIDA.

Bob Riha, Jr.

California teacher Ric Loya is one of five teachers who appear in a new education video on AIDS and HIV.

Ric Loya is a high school health educator. Nancy Newman is an English teacher at an alternative school for teens. Bonnie Cummings is an elementary school teacher.

Different classrooms, different subjects, different teaching styles. But they have one thing in common. They've all talked to their students about AIDS.

"Any good teacher will develop a rapport with students," says Loya, a ninth-grade teacher at Huntington Park (California) High School. "And one day, one of your students will ask you a question about AIDS.

"When that happens, you'll want to be prepared to answer."

Ric Loya is one of five teachers featured in the video *Saving a Generation*, part of a training package from NEA's Health Information Network. To prepare teachers to teach about HIV and AIDS, the package gives examples of successful strategies.

"I have a lot of colleagues who are terrified to talk to students about HIV and AIDS," notes Loya. "This film offers a lot to allay their fears."

The prospect of teaching students about HIV and AIDS is intimidating at first, says Bonnie Cummings, who teaches fifth grade at Campus Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, and is also featured on the video.

"You talk of abstinence and sex, of risk and death, of discrimination and fear," adds Cummings. "These aren't easy lessons to give your students."

But there are ways to teach these lessons. In recent months, many new resources and teaching guidelines have been developed specifically for the classroom. There are games to spark discussions about high-risk behavior, tests to evaluate student comprehension.

There's caution as well. "You have to make sure you have accurate information and your materials are student-centered," says Loya. "AIDS education is a lucrative market—there's a lot of garbage out there. And you can't be so outlandish that you lose your job. That doesn't help anyone."

"Training is really important," says Jim Williams, director of NEA's Health Information Network. "All school personnel should receive continuing education about AIDS to ensure that they have the most current information and the most effective health education materials."

One new resource receiving high praise from educators and AIDS experts alike is a new interactive videodisc from ABC News. This bilingual (Spanish and English) videodisc features interviews with former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and the late Ryan White, along with a collection of statistics giving the global picture of AIDS.

Nancy Newman is an English teacher at the New Directions School in Tallahassee. "I teach at a school for high school dropouts, and this resource is an excellent package of current, accurate information," says Newman.

"The time to start talking to your students is now," says Bonnie Cummings. "If we don't get their attention now, they'll engage in high-risk behavior as soon as they get a chance."

In five years, AIDS could be the leading cause of death among 20- to 29-year-olds. Among them could be some of your former students, notes Loya. "I've had students tell me, 'My sister had AIDS,' or 'I know someone who tested positive for HIV.'"

"You don't have to be a health educator to talk to your students," says Loya. "It makes it easier, yes. But if you want to help the students in your community learn what to believe and what not to believe, there is help.

"After all," he adds, "What we're talking about here is keeping these kids from dying."

—Anita Merina

Rules To Teach By

NEA's Health Information Network and the U.S. Department of Health's Centers for Disease Control stress the importance of a solid AIDS education program. Here are some questions to ask of your program.

- Are parents, teachers, and students involved in developing, implementing, and assessing AIDS education policies and programs?
- Is the program included as an important part of a more comprehensive school health education program?
- Is the program designed to help teenage students avoid specific types of behavior that increase the risk of becoming infected with HIV?
- Is adequate training about AIDS provided for school administrators, teachers, nurses, and counselors—especially those who teach about AIDS?
- To what extent are sufficient program development time, classroom time, and educational materials provided for education about AIDS?

Resources To Use

NEA's Health Information Network has helped develop a number of guides to help you teach about AIDS.

- *Responding to HIV and AIDS*, a special publication for NEA members. Contact the Health Information Network, 1590 Adamson Pkwy., Suite 260, Morrow, GA 30260. Single copies free, bulk copies $2 for p&h.
- "Saving a Generation," a training package for teachers. Contact Select Media, 74 Varick St., Suite 305, New York, NY 10013.
- "Tell Me About AIDS," a curriculum for K-6 students. The package includes a teachers' guide, student workbook, and parents' guide. Contact Dianne Kerr, ASHA, P.O. Box 708, Kent, OH 44240.
- *Straight Talk*, a full-color glossy magazine for teens about AIDS, available for 75¢ a copy, $37.50 for a box of 50 copies, from Rodale Press, Custom Publishing Division, 33 E. Minor St., Emmaus, PA 18908.
- *Understanding Ourselves. Health: AIDS*, a bilingual (English and Spanish) videodisc from ABC News InterActive Video. To order, contact the Optical Data Corporation, 20 Technology Drive, Box 4919, Warren, NJ 07060 (800-524-2481).

RESOURCES

Free or Inexpensive

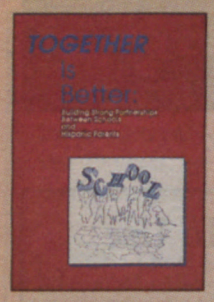
SCIENCE

Oceanography for Landlocked Classrooms. Gerry M. Madrazo, Jr., and Paul B. Hounshell, editors. Provides teachers wherever they may be with easy-to-follow lessons in topics as various as whales, crabs, and beach erosion. 104 pp. $15; NABT members, $10. Add $2 p&h. National Association of Biology Teachers, 11250 Roger Bacon Drive #19, Reston, VA 22090.

GEOGRAPHY

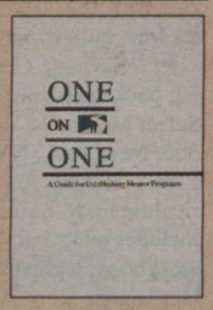
Geography Across the Curriculum. Dennis and Judy Reinhartz. Discusses ways to integrate geography into every classroom—also describes student activities and lists background materials. 96 pp. Stock no. 3070-2-00-FF. $9.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516, or call toll-free 800/229-4200.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT



Together Is Better: Building Strong Partnerships Between Schools and Hispanic Parents. Suggests ways to involve parents of Hispanic students in their children's school lives. 71 pp. $10 postpaid. Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 310, Washington, DC 20036.

COUNSELING



One on One: A Guide for Establishing Mentor Programs. Describes exemplary programs and suggests ways of recruiting and training adults to serve as advisers to at-risk schoolchildren. 58 pp. Single copies, free. U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Planning, Budget, and Evaluation, Rm. 4049, 400 Maryland Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4110.

Chart Your Course: Career Planning for Young Women and ***Building Partnerships: Career Exploration in the Workplace.*** Women's Educational Equity Act Publishing Center. The former is a career exploration book for eighth and ninth graders; the latter, a set of guidelines for industry/education partnership programs aimed at helping young women succeed in nontraditional careers. Respectively 65 pp. and 35 pp. $16 for the set, plus $2 p&h. By mail from Education Development Center, WEEA Publishing Center, 55 Chapel St., Newton, MA 02160 or by credit card from 800/225-3088 (in MA 617/969-7100).

"Continua en la Escuela" ("Stay in School") posters (set "SPSS"). Four 11" x 17" Spanish-language posters depicting young Hispanic American women who had reasons to drop out of school, but didn't do it. $14 plus $5 p&h. Organization for Equal Education of the Sexes, 808 Union St., Brooklyn, NY 11215. (For $2, you can order the *Great Women* catalog of English-language posters, including the "Stay in School" posters.)

MUSIC

Exploring Careers in Music. Describes careers in the business side of music as well as in music performance and teaching. 112 pp. $8 prepaid. Stock no. 1011. By mail from Music Educators National Conference, Publications Sales, 1902 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091, or call toll-free 800/828-0229.

Music and Your Child: The Importance of Music to Children's Development and ***Message to Parents: A Parent's Guide To Enhancing Your Child's Musical Experience.*** Brochures. For a free copy of each, send #10 SASE (45¢ postage) to the American Music Conference, 303 East Wacker Dr., Suite 1214, Dept. NEA, Chicago, IL 60601.

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*With the addition of our new Apple IIe Card available March 1991. © 1990 Apple Computer, Inc. Apple, the Apple logo, Mac, Macintosh and "The

RESOURCES

TV Tips

Eyes on the Prize—*PBS, Sunday-Tuesday, February 3-5, and February 10-12, 10-11 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* This award-winning series details America's civil rights struggle from 1954 to 1965.

For All Mankind—*The Disney Channel, Sunday, February 3, 9-10 p.m. ET.* The story of Apollo's mission to the moon.

CBS

Sarah, Plain and Tall—*CBS Hallmark Hall of Fame, Sunday, February 3, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Glenn Close *(photo left)* stars in the story of a turn-of-the-century New England woman and how she changes the lives of a farmer and his children. Scripts are available from local CBS affiliates.

Songs Tell the Story: African-American History 1860-1990—*National Public Radio, Tuesdays, February 5, 12, 19, 26; check local listings for times.* This four-part series features songs created and performed by African-Americans.

Great Lakes, Fragile Seas—*PBS, Wednesday, February 6, 8-9 p.m. ET.* This National Geographic Special looks at pollution damage to the delicate ecosystem of America's Great Lakes and scientists' search for solutions.

A&E Stage: Mary, Queen of Scots—*Arts & Entertainment Network, Thursday, February 7, 9-11:30 p.m. ET.* A dramatization of the historic confrontation between Mary, Queen of Scots, and Queen Elizabeth I of England.

As Long as He Can Count Cows—*PBS, Saturday, February 9, 6:30-7:30 p.m. ET (closed-captioned).* A film set in the Asian country of Bhutan. A teacher tries to convince a family their young son needs glasses.

The Road to *Brown*—*PBS, Wednesday, February 13, 10-11 p.m. ET.* A profile of Charles Houston, the African-American attorney who led the legal campaign that ended with the landmark *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision.

Uncertain Futures *(working title)*—*PBS, Tuesday, February 19, 10-11 p.m. ET.* This documentary examines the high dropout, unemployment, and crime rates among young African-American men and the work of a growing number of individuals, groups, and organizations to help these young men change their lives.

Special Friday Night Education Initiative—*ABC, Friday, February 22, 8-10 p.m. ET.* An evening of family programs on educational themes includes episodes of *Full House, Family Matters, Perfect Strangers,* and *Going Places.*

This commitment of prime time was initiated with the cooperation of NEA and other national educational organizations, including the PTA and the National School Boards Association.

The Orangeburg Massacre—*American Public Radio; check local listings for date and time.* This docudrama recalls a tragic moment in America's civil rights struggle, when police officers in a small South Carolina town fired upon African-American students peacefully protesting an act of racism.

Son of the Morning Star—*ABC; check local listings for dates and times.* This miniseries recalls the career of General George Armstrong Custer and his role in the U.S. government's brutal war of attrition against the Plains Indians.

Capital Cities/ABC

These listings are provided by KIDSNET, *a clearinghouse for children's TV and radio.*

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People

Wheeling Toward Another Olympics

Minnesota physical education teacher **Deb Sunderman** won't stop with just one Olympic gold.

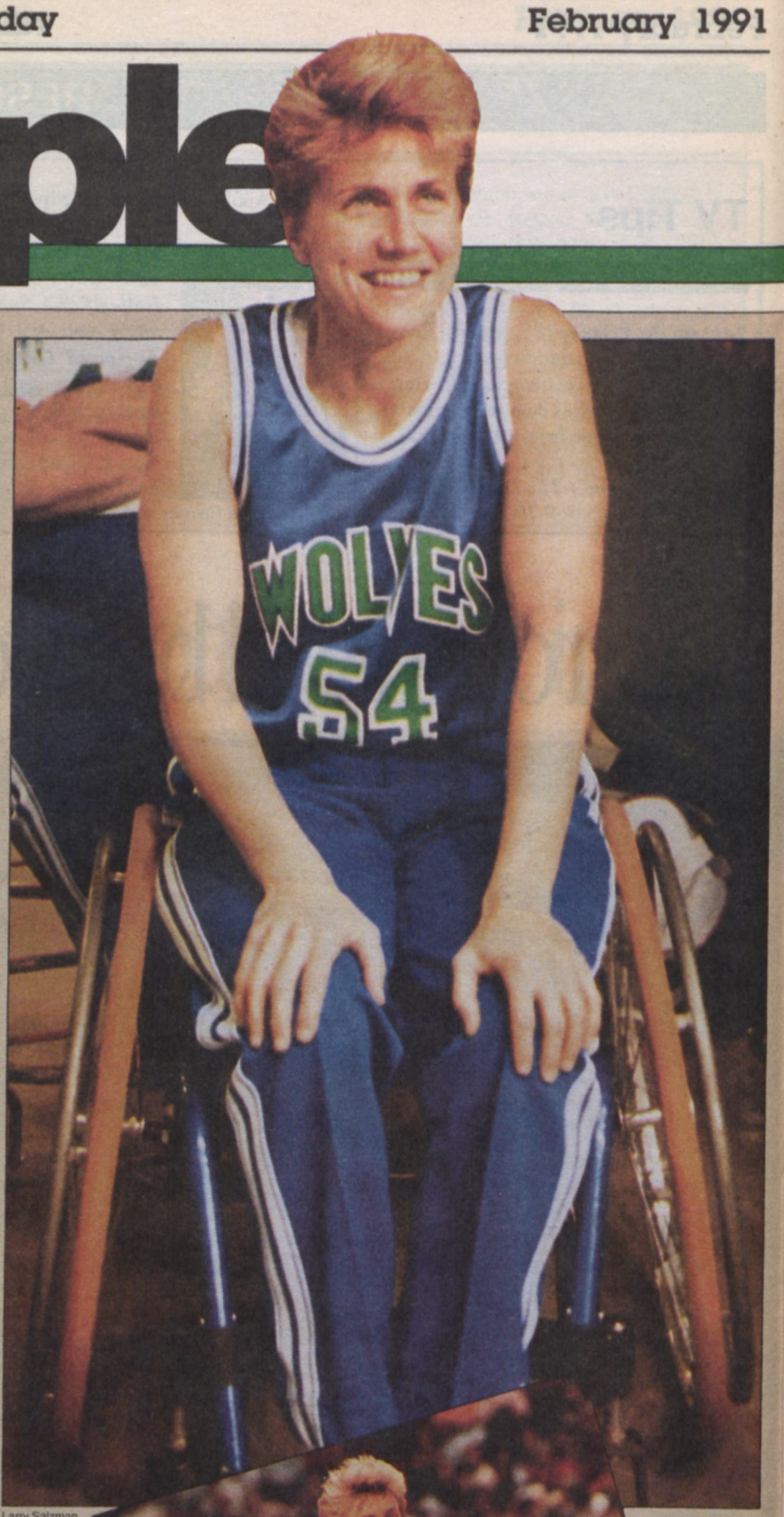
As a member of the 1988 U.S. women's wheelchair basketball team, Sunderman won her first gold medal in Seoul two years ago. Last summer, at the World Cup Championship in France, she led the U.S. team to another gold, scoring 20 of the team's 58 points.

And this year, she hopes to make the U.S. Olympic team heading for Barcelona in 1992—and take part in her first 26-mile marathon.

Sunderman squeezes in practicing, weight training, and arm aerobics after teaching a full load at Five Hawks Elementary School outside Minneapolis and coaching softball and volleyball there.

In class, she runs a disability awareness program where her students—and some teachers—get "a chance to see what it feels like to be in a wheelchair. Our students," Sunderman says, "know what you can do in a chair, not what you can't. They learn to look at the person rather than the disability."

Sunderman's dedication and pace are a lesson to her students as well. "I know that if I'm working as hard as I am," she says, "others are going to have to work twice as hard to keep up with me."



Larry Salzman

DDB Needham

Call Him...Anytime

"**Jeff Golub's** students really know how to get to him," said a recent ad in *USA Today*. The ad proclaimed Golub winner of a monthly Good Neighbor Award, presented by State Farm insurance and the National Council of Teachers of English for commitment to the teaching profession and a spirit of innovation.

But the ad copy doesn't tell the whole story: Not only do Golub's students at Seattle's Shorecrest High School know how to "get to him"—teachers and parents do, too. They reach him on a computer network based in his home.

Golub has set up a local electronic bulletin board with four files that anyone with a computer and modem can use to contact either him or one another.

Teachers send messages back and forth in Faculty Lounge, students in Student Lounge, and parents in Parent Conference. There's also a Homework Hotline where kids can get help with class assignments.

Although the system is used mainly by the Shorecrest High population, Golub is spreading word of its availability throughout the Seattle area.

Golub feels the system's potential is unlimited. "What a great way for teachers to reach the community!" he says.

David Zalubowski

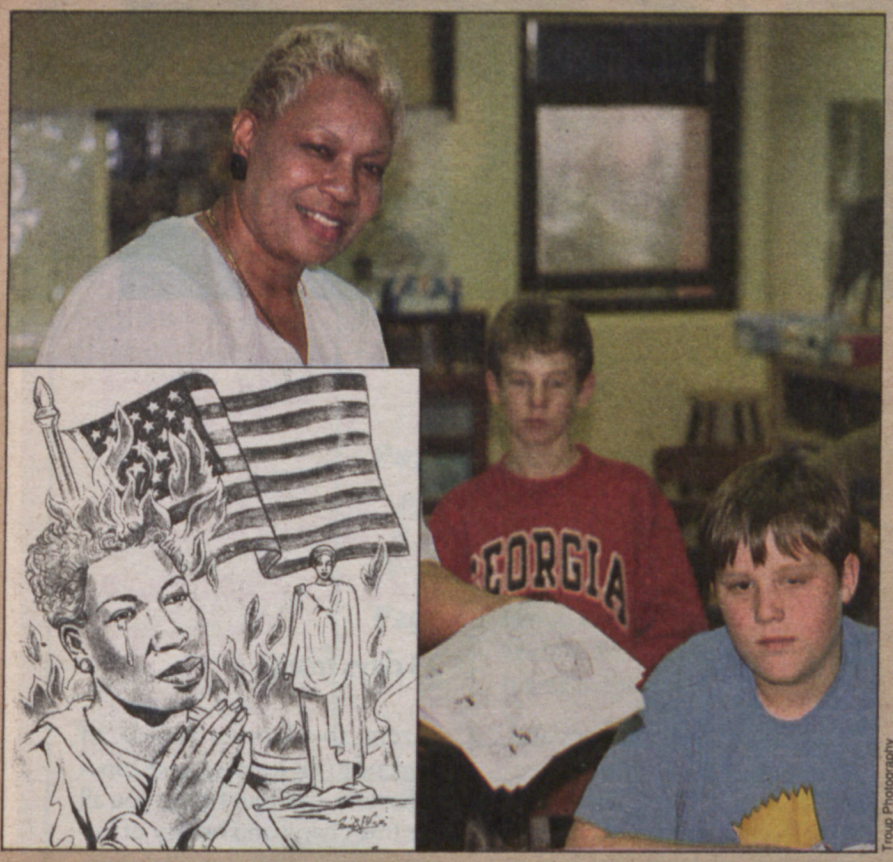
Leave the Busing to Them

Families used to pass their occupations down from one generation to the next. The Marshall-Davis-Blair family—three generations of school bus drivers—have taken a different route. They've passed their occupation up and down from the middle.

In 1978 **Marie Davis** (center) started work as a driver in the St. Vrain Valley school district, Longmont, Colorado. About the same time, her mother, **Marge Marshall** (right), retired after 26 years with Montgomery Ward.

"I stayed home a year, but then I was bored," Marshall recalls. "Then Marie said, 'You like kids. Why not drive a bus?'" So Marshall, too, applied at St. Vrain Valley. She's still a driver with the district.

Four years ago, Davis's daughter, **Mischael Blair** (left), needed a job. Her mother suggested school bus driving. Blair has been a substitute driver for St. Vrain ever since. Now, every morning, Marshall and Davis drive out of the same bus compound—"Only I go south, and she goes north," Marshall says. And some days Blair takes the road right along with them.



Troup Photography

Life and Times in Poetic Images

Sarajo Wilkes, a reading teacher in Carnesville, Georgia, finds poetic inspiration in the daily news. Her poignant images of flags burning, soldiers in Saudi Arabia, and Black history struck a chord with the judges of the World Book of Poetry, who awarded her their Golden Poet award.

The Georgia poet began writing three years ago when she was asked to co-host a Black history party at her church. She offered a tribute to the Rev. Martin Luther King entitled "Keep the Dream Alive." That work is now a part of the King archives in Atlanta.

Wilkes captured national attention when she sent her "Ode to Ole Glory" to President Bush and nine members of Congress. She received many letters of praise, but she has one more goal yet to realize. "I'd like to read my ode to President Bush," she says. (Inset is an illustration depicting Wilkes as she performs "Ode to Old Glory.")

Caring Careers

As a Navy ombudsman, **Beth Hancock** helped military wives through the most difficult moments of their lives. "What they needed most was to hear that someone cared and wanted to help them with their problems," the Virginia teacher aide recalls.

Hancock sees her school role in much the same way. She works at the Center for Effective Learning, a school for at-risk teens in Virginia Beach.

"Students coming into this school have already had so many disruptions in their lives," says Hancock. "They need a lot of nurturing and someone to listen to their needs."

"Conflict resolution is a key to getting these students back on track, and I use many of the same skills I called upon at the military camp."

Connie Hrisko, a former CEL teacher, agrees with Hancock's approach. Hrisko nominated Hancock for Virginia Beach Teacher Assistant of the Year last year, Hancock's first as an aide.

"Beth can walk in and create an instant bond with students," says Hrisko. "That's important to the kids."

Dennis Finley

BOOK BEAT

Two Books, Two Kinds of Kids

Some kids live high-risk lives, some say their prayers. They're usually not the same kids.

Adolescents at Risk
By Joy G. Dryfoos
Oxford. 280 pp.
$29.95.

About 25 percent of kids 10-17 will not become viable adults unless society intervenes, says Joy Dryfoos, author of *Adolescents at Risk*. We know who they are, she adds, and we don't need "more research...before interventions can be initiated."

Dryfoos has read all the studies, all the program evaluations. She's found six indicators that will identify high-risk kids even in the lower grades. You'll know kids are high-risk, she says, when they're:

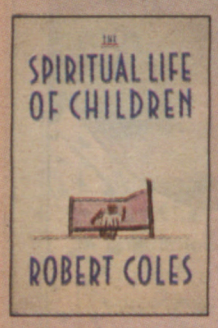
- doing poorly and expecting to do poorly in school
- acting out
- hanging out with other kids who act out
- insufficiently bonded to their parents
- living in an impoverished area
- characterized by any of the above factors at an early age.

But Dryfoos has a heretical theory about targeting preventive programs: focus them not on individuals but on the institutions that shape—or fail to shape—their lives.

Which means: don't insist that federal aid flow to categorical programs (like Chapter 1), which target services to particular children. Instead let states, cities, and school districts spend outside money their own way. They'll find it easier, Dryfoos thinks, to strengthen the institutions that serve kids—schools, social agencies, drug abuse programs, say—and to make them work together.

The schools should take a lead role, Dryfoos believes, because they're where the kids are. They're also part of the problem; school is where kids fail first.

To make failure less likely, Dryfoos would provide every child with his or her own "Sherpa" (after the Himalayan guides): a mentor to "guide the child over the rough spots and run interference against the barriers to personal success."



The Spiritual Life of Children
By Robert Coles
Houghton Mifflin.
358 pp. $22.95.

If you're going to study the spiritual life of children, as Harvard child psychiatrist Robert Coles does in this book, you necessarily concentrate on children who've had some formal religious training. But, studies show, most high-risk children don't go to religious services. So *The Spiritual Life of Children* is mainly about the half of American kids who have almost no risk factors at all.

Why would a public school teacher, who's supposed to be neutral when it comes to religion, be interested in reading about kids' religious views?

One reason is precisely because those views are forbidden territory. Where else but in a book by Robert Coles will you get to hear a classroom of fifth graders discuss the nature of God?

Also, religious beliefs supply kids with ways to work out problems, including ones that come up in school. Why should their teachers be shut out of understanding that process?

The Whole Language Catalog
By Kenneth S. Goodman, Lois Bridges Bird, and Yetta M. Goodman
American School Publishers (800/882-2502). 445 pp.
$29.95.

Now for a third book. *The Whole Language Catalog* matches its authors' aims. The book is big—as big as a dinner tray. Its authors—the Goodmans are whole-language pioneers—want it to show where the movement is today. In 400 fascinating pages of resource lists, book excerpts, illustrations, interviews with other whole-language gurus, they succeed.

Among the issues raised is this one, mentioned by Kenneth Goodman: can you mix whole language, based on experience, with basals, based on authority?

—Nancy R. Needham, Book Review Editor

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At Risk Students

At-Risk, Low-Achieving Students in the Classroom. Judy Brown Lehr and Hazel Wiggins Harris. Covers a huge variety of concerns, including grouping, organization and planning, teacher expectations, effective teaching, positive discipline, and collegial learning. 104pp. 1988. (3338-8-00-F6) $9.95

At-Risk Students and Thinking: Perspectives from Research. Barbara Z. Presseisen, Editor. Special attention is given to such areas as understanding the issues ... learning and assisted performance ... classifications versus instructional goals ... curriculum and instruction ... and teaching teachers to empower at-risk students. 160pp. 1988. (1483-9-00-F6) $14.95

Early Childhood At Risk: Actions and Advocacy for Young Children. Victoria Jean Dimidjian. Reviews the four cornerstones of growth in the early years and details directions for change in teacher intervention; encourages teacher advocacy on behalf of children. 64pp. 1989. (1481-2-00-F6) $7.95

Involving At-Risk Students in Learning. Judy Lehr and Hazel Wiggins Harris. Full color filmstrip with audiocassette narration and printed Guide. Approximately 10 min. 1989. (0240-7-00-F6) $37.50

Children of Alcoholics / Addicts. Richard L. Towers. This book investigates the impact it has on their learning, how to identify, what school staff can do to help, and where to go for outside help, materials, and resources. 80pp. 1989. (0242-3-00-F6) $8.95

Children of Divorce (with an in-service workshop). Susan R. Berger, Rohna A. Shoul, Susan Warschauer. A complete in-service workshop plan is included. 48pp. 1989. (0246-6-00-F6) $6.95

Homeless Students. Cynthia Crosson Tower and Donna J. White. Gives clear-cut suggestions on how the school can intervene with these students: in transition, with studies, with peers, and with self-concept. It also deals with the tough problems of what schools can do to help, outside the classroom. 48pp. 1989. (0245-8-00-F6) $6.95

Nonachieving Students At Risk: School, Family, and Community Intervention. Harry W. Sartain. This research-oriented publication analyzes the frustration, depression, anger and attitudes, delinquency patterns, and dropout trends that put more than one-fourth of the students in our schools at risk. 64pp. 1989. (3074-5-00-F6) $7.95

School Violence: A Survival Guide for School Staff (with emphasis on robbery, rape, and hostage taking). Chester L. Quarles. The focus is on crime prevention, school security, and school safety. 48pp. 1989. (0243-1-00-F6) $6.95

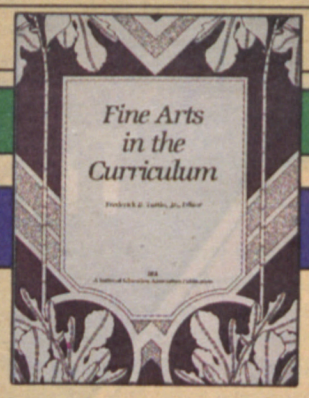
Student Drug and Alcohol Abuse, How Schools Can Help Combat. Richard L. Towers. Symptoms, causes, and interventions are provided for all school staff. 224pp. 1987. (3291-8-00-F6) $12.95

Student Eating Disorders, How Schools Can Help Combat. Michael P. Levine. What school staff needs to know about anorexia nervosa and bulimia. 280pp. 1987. (3289-6-00-F6) $12.95

Student Pregnancy, How Schools Can Help Combat. Nancy Compton, Mara Duncan, and Jack Hruska. Reviews student parents and their offspring, with interventions. 184pp. 1987. (3287-X-00-F6) $12.95

Student Suicide: A Guide for Intervention. John A. Vidal. Concentrates on those aspects where help is most needed, such as the role of the schools ... a crisis team approach ... a contingency plan ... mistakes to avoid ... and what teachers and other school staff can do, now. 56pp. 1989. (0244-X-00-F6) $7.95

Fine Arts



Fine Arts: Elementary Level. Miriam Kronish and Jeryl Abelmann. 56pp. 1989. (0301-2-00-F6) $7.95

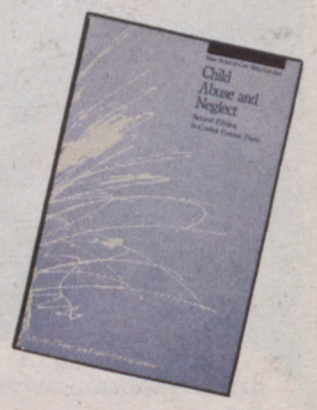
Fine Arts: Humanities. Thomas Rooney. A complete case study is provided for starting a humanities course. 56pp. 1989. (0302-0-00-F6) $7.95

Fine Arts: Performing Arts. Mildred B. Beane. 88pp. 1989. (0303-9-00-F6) $8.95

Fine Arts: Visual Arts. Don L. Brigham. Includes actual lessons, activities, models, and examples. 80pp. 1989. (0304-7-00-F6) $8.95

Fine Arts in the Curriculum. Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr., Editor. Special attention is given to the current thinking on the relation of the arts to excellence in education. 64pp. 1985. (1531-2-00-F6) $10.95

Child Abuse and Neglect



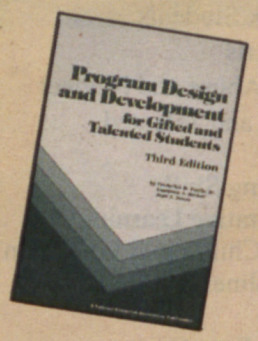
Child Abuse and Neglect. Second Edition. Cynthia Crosson Tower. Helps school staff recognize, report, and deal with issues of child abuse and neglect, including long-term prevention. 224pp. 1987. (3295-0-00-F6) $12.95

Gifted & Talented

Characteristics and Identification of Gifted and Talented Students. Third Edition. Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr. and Laurence A. Becker. This edition highlights problems of gifted students, multiple criteria for identification, use of standardized tests, and minority gifted. It also adds new information on right/left brain functions, the underachieving gifted, preschool education for the gifted, and gifted girls. 144pp. 1988. (0729-8-00-F6) $12.95

Program Design and Development for Gifted and Talented Students. Third Edition. Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr., Laurence A. Becker, and Joan A. Sousa. Provides a rationale for gifted programs, available program design, curricular models, successful teacher characteristics and attitudes, and program evaluation. The third edition features descriptions of newer programs, a concern for "pullout" programs, and the function of the coordinator of the gifted program. 160pp. 1988. (0727-1-00-F6) $12.95

Gifted and Talented Children: How Parents Can Help. Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr. A package of leaflets to help schools help parents with gifted and talented children. Pkg. of 25 leaflets. (0731-X-00-F6) $5.95



Gifted and Talented Students. Revised Edition. Frederick B. Tuttle, Jr. A concise, readable report that helps you review the research and provides a summary of issues in the field: characteristics, identification, program design, teacher selection, and evaluation. 32pp. 1983. (1045-0-10-F6) $3.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Elementary Classroom. Mary J. Heimberger. You will be excited by these G & T activities in reading/language arts, social studies, math, science, and the entire curriculum. 80pp. 1980. (0735-2-00-F6) $8.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Middle School. Jill D. Wright. In addition to the individual content areas, you will receive expert help in interdisciplinary activities, counseling, problem solving, and teaching strategies. 64pp. 1983. (0745-X-00-F6) $9.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the English Classroom. William W. West. Gives you a design for a lesson sequence, an example of a teaching sequence, suggestions for selecting unit themes, and activities to develop upper-level skills. 48pp. 1980. (0734-4-00-F6) $6.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Mathematics Classroom. Kevin G. Bartkovich and William C. George. Lets you review and plan these eight sections: identification, approaches, teaching strategies, implementation, evaluation, teacher selection, textbook selection, and accelerative options. 48pp. 1980. (0738-7-00-F6) $5.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Science Classroom. Second Edition. William D. Romey with Mary L. Hibert. Ephasizes the importance of a classroom environment that encourages students to try ideas even if they might fail, an attitude that fosters creative thinking. 64pp. 1987. (0748-4-00-F6) $8.95

Teaching the Gifted and Talented in the Social Studies Classroom. Paul D. Plowman. Suggestions for developing creativity and intelligence are used to provide challenging, meaningful, and appropriate learning opportunities. 56pp. 1980. (0737-9-00-F6) $6.95

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Thinking Skills

Critical Thinking Skills. Marcia Heiman and Joshua Slomianko. Here is a systematic approach to understanding what thinking skills really are, identifying the kinds of problems students have in remembering, problem-solving and learning, and what you can do to improve critical thinking skills in your own classroom. 48pp. 1986. (1693-9-10-F6) $6.95

Measuring Thinking Skills in the Classroom. Revised Edition. Richard J. Stiggins, Evelyn Rubel, and Edys Quellmalz. Learn how teachers can measure basic thinking skills that students use to solve academic and life problems. 32pp. 1988. (0211-3-20-F6) $8.95

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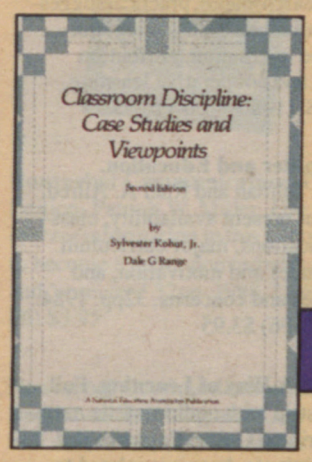

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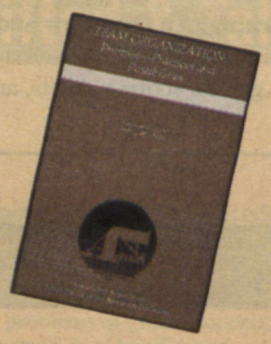

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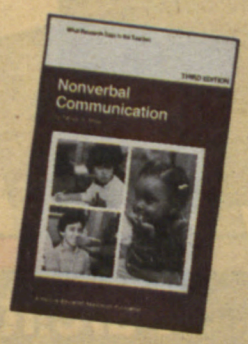

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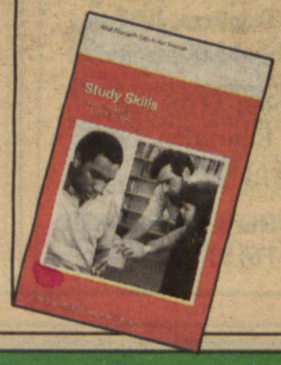

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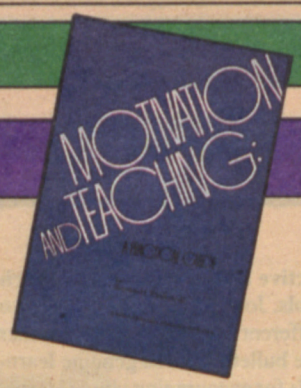

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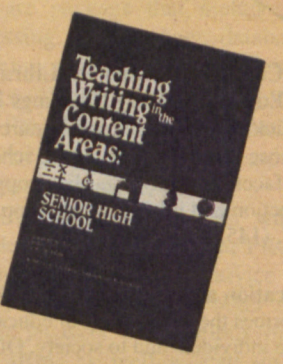

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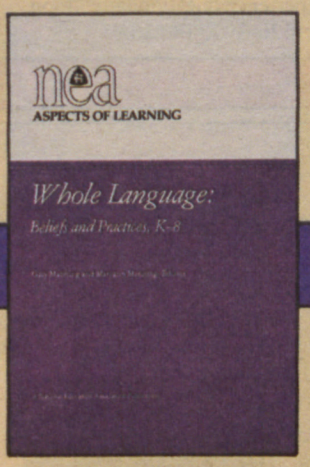

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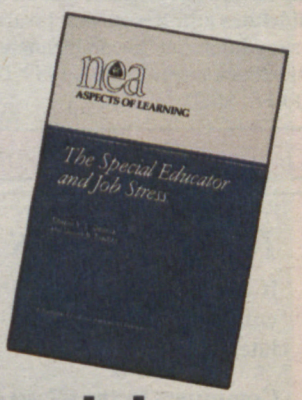

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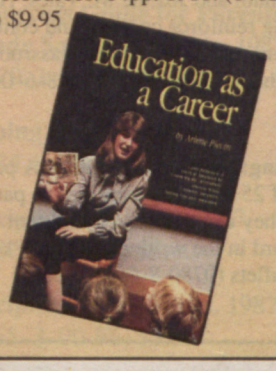

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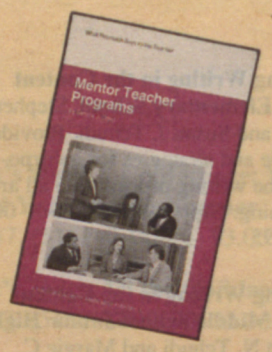

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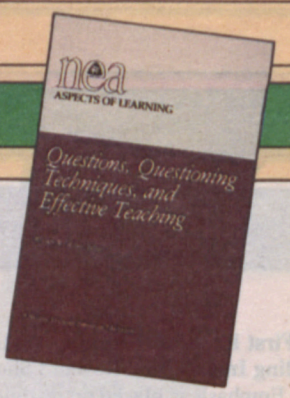

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Steve DeLozier teaches third grade at Check Elementary School in southeastern Virginia. He's also a computer wiz.

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NEA EdStar fills a critical need created by the past decade's computer revolution.

In the 1980s the proportion of American schools that have at least one computer grew from 18 to 95 percent. There are now approximately 1.7 million computers in public schools.

Yet far too many educators remain computer novices. A 1988 study by the U.S. Office of Technology Assessment concluded that only half of America's teachers actually use computers in their teaching.

"We're not going to have computer-using teachers until teachers become computer-using people," says Gary Watts, director of NEA's National Center for Innovation.

"NEA EdStar gives NEA members a tool for personal productivity," Watts explains. "As teachers become enthusiastic users of these powerful tools, they'll better recognize the potential that computers hold for improving instruction—and restructuring schools."

Katherine Porter, a media specialist and NEA member in Montgomery County, Maryland, agrees. Porter was one of several NEA members who tried out NEA EdStar during a demonstration this fall.

"Any teacher, even those with little or no background in computers, will be able to catch on easily with EdStar," says Porter. "It will save time and enable us to be even more creative in our presentations."

"I think every teacher will want one," adds Steve DeLozier. "With EdStar, you can manage your grade book and prepare tests right on the computer. You can even develop interactive lessons for your students with sound, motion pictures, and animation."

In the EdStar package: a VGA color monitor, a 30-megabyte hard disk, a mouse (to manipulate text and graphics on screen), a modem (for communicating with other computers), and a high-quality IBM dot-matrix printer. Coupled with this hardware is a broad array of built-in software programs:

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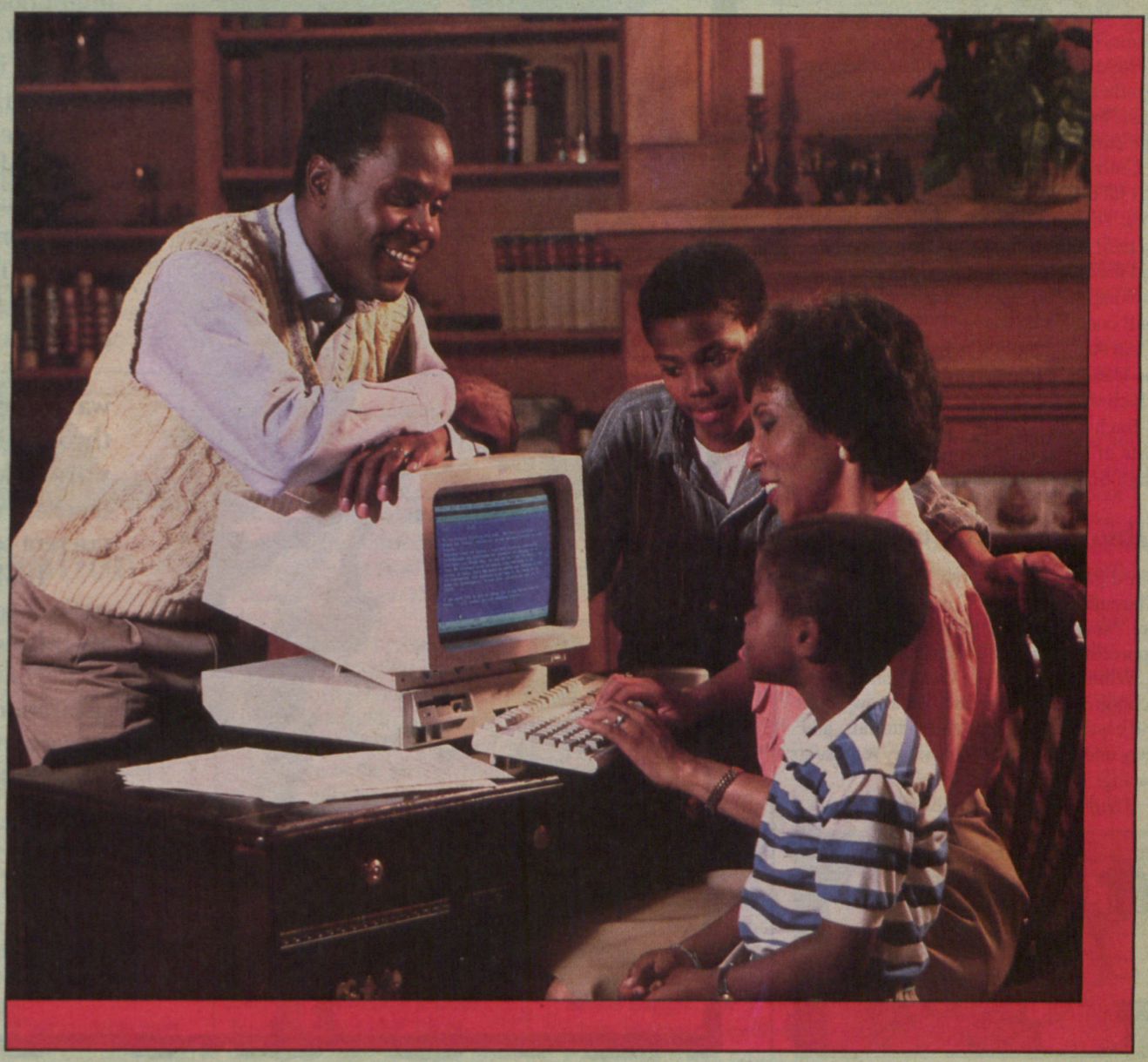
To make the EdStar system affordable for NEA members, NEA Special Services is offering a financing program. NEA members will be able to buy the entire system, including the printer, for $2,249, with no down payment and monthly payments of $58.

NEA is also negotiating with Apple Computer for a package similar to the IBM-based EdStar.

Questions? For more information on the NEA EdStar program, contact NEA Special Services at 800-637-4636.

—Anita Merina



IDEA EXCHANGE

A Parent in My Class? It's Manic Monday!

In a take-off on the book *Freaky Friday* by Mary Rodgers (HarpJ, 1973), in which parent and child change places, West Jr. High in Mankato, Minnesota, is sponsoring a series of Manic Mondays.

On these days, all parents are invited to replace their children in the classroom, while the kids go to their parents' offices or do household chores.

At school, the adults open their child's locker for textbooks, then follow their child's schedule, participating in classroom discussions, working on projects, donning gym clothes for physical education—whatever's required.

The parents must sign an agreement not to smoke or go to their cars.

At the end of day, there's a mock graduation exercise for the parents, complete with "Pomp and Circumstance" and diplomas.

Parents like the program. Some 40 percent of parents have attended each of the two Manic Mondays held so far, reports eighth grade English teacher Beth Christensen. She says the experience has really strengthened the bond between parents and school.

Operation Cookie Drop

Writing cards and letters to military members in Saudi Arabia is a step in the right direction, but not good enough for Salee Weld's home economics students at Twin Valley High School in Elverson, Pennsylvania (photo below).

Weld's kids put their skills to work and, together with another home economics class, baked 2,000 cookies for the troops. The entire school supported their project.

Clubs, classes, and individual students and faculty donated money for ingredients. The cafeteria staff mixed the batter on their industrial equipment. Students and teachers collected shoe boxes for packing the cookies, and a local outlet mall contributed more.

An Army recruiter helped Weld contact the USO's Philadelphia headquarters, which shipped and distributed the goodies.

Each cookie came with a message: "A taste of home from Twin Valley Jr./Sr. High School in Elverson, Pennsylvania."

Ohio's 'Smart Cookies'

Third graders in Marilyn Tullys' class at Clarendon School in Canton City, Ohio, are "smart cookies" when it comes to appreciating public education.

While they may not understand all the economics involved, they do know about the cost of equipment and materials, and they understand that this money represents caring.

Their knowledge comes from a year-long "Smart Cookies" unit developed by Tullys, who hopes to provide the children with a basis for understanding their place in a larger society.

PSEA

As part of the unit, the school district business manager visited Tullys' students—and was surprised by their barrage of intelligent questions about the price of books, desks, school buses, and maintenance.

The unit touches every subject area. In English class, for example, the kids write letters of thanks to taxpayers.

At the end of the year, the students present a show for their parents, complete with songs, raps, and cheers about good self-management and high personal expectations.

Which Comes First —Broth or Bed?

Kindergarten teacher Florene Smith uses drawings illustrating nursery rhymes to teach her students at Douglas Community School in Nebraska not only the rhymes themselves, but sequencing as well.

When a child is learning a rhyme, Smith provides the printed version plus three cards, each with a drawing that depicts a scene described in a part of that rhyme. The child must place the cards in proper sequence.

Pictured at right are the words to one rhyme and its accompanying set of cards.

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Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work

In North Carolina

School Comes to Parents At Their Work

Five years ago, school guidance counselors in the Newton-Conover school district in rural North Carolina had a hard time getting together with working parents to talk about their kids.

As at most other schools, parent conferences were usually scheduled during the day—when many parents were at work. But evening conferences weren't much more attractive: parents found them inconvenient or intimidating.

"The problem wasn't desire. These parents wanted to get involved in their children's education," explains Susan McGee, a guidance counselor and member of the Catawba County Council on Adolescents. "They just didn't know how to manage it."

But McGee did. She brought the district's six counselors to the parents—at work.

"We wanted to arrange for counseling at the work site, with no penalty to the working parents," recalls McGee, coordinator of Parents, Industry, Educators Cooperating for Educational Success (PIECES), now four years old.

"We chose family-owned businesses as test sites for our idea, because we felt they'd understand our parents' dilemma," McGee says.

And they did.

The president of Ridgeview, Inc., a Newton hosiery mill, immediately agreed to arrange for 15-minute conferences one Friday of each month. Regency Bedspread, in Conover, soon followed suit.

"We meet in conference rooms, or even in a counselor's car," explains McGee.

Having checked the child's records, talked to teachers, and written up a progress report, the counselors are well prepared. Says McGee, "We talk about grades, discipline problems, report cards, test results—you name it."

The PIECES program fills a critical need, since North Carolina ranks first in the nation in percentage of mothers who work, according to the North Carolina State Data Center.

And Catawba County ranks first in the state—76.7 percent of its mothers are in the labor force.

Given those statistics, "we decided it was time to have all of us—schools, parents, businesses—work together for a change," says McGee.

The collaboration is paying off. Parents who work at Ridgeview and Regency now feel comfortable enough to attend evening conferences at the schools and are initiating meetings with the counselors to ask questions about their children's progress.

"More businesses are interested in participating," notes McGee. "And we even have a few grandparents who've arranged for us to come to meetings at the worksite to talk about their grandchildren."

Word is spreading beyond Catawba County, too. A number of school systems across the country have been contacting McGee for tips on creating their own worksite programs.

—Anita Merina

David Rotte

Working together: North Carolina counselor Susan McGee discusses a school progress report with parent Jack Houston in the factory conference room. Counseling at the worksite allows busy parents to keep up with their kids' school work.

In Georgia

Kids Get Early Attention

Four-year-old Jamice arrives at Spring Place Elementary School in Chatsworth, Georgia, grinning from ear to ear as she offers a laced, beaded hair bow as a Christmas gift to kindergarten teacher Renda Baggett.

It'll be another year before Jamice enters kindergarten. But her monthly school experiences this year are attracting national scrutiny as school leaders determine the benefits of early intervention programs.

Jamice is one of 30 prekindergarten students exposed to learning at Spring Place Elementary. The two-year, state-funded program is based on the belief that at-risk youngsters can—and should—be identified when they're as young as four years old.

Spring Place serves 1,100 regular elementary students in Chatsworth, on the Tennessee border. Many parents are employed in nearby factories.

School officials find candidates for the preschool program by working with area social service agencies to identify families that require early intervention services.

"Many of our students have parents who dropped out of high school or a single parent who works long hours," says principal and NEA member C. L. Dunn. "Their home environments—where traditional forms of stimulation often don't exist—have put them behind by the time they get to kindergarten."

The preschool program, funded by a $60,000 state grant that supports school innovations, targets both children and their parents. "We build up the self-confidence of the care-givers so they can give better care," explains Dunn. "In other words, we help you so you can help your child."

Parents, students, and teachers in the program meet once a month. First, parents and students come to the school for a meal and a readiness lesson. Teachers may focus, for instance, on language—by exploring how parents converse with their children—or on motor skills—working on hand-eye coordination.

During alternating months, a teacher and paraprofessional go to the child's home. They meet with the parents and review additional prekindergarten readiness skills, such as recognizing letters, words, numbers, and colors. They may work with the parents on how to discipline their children without damaging the child's self-esteem.

In the second year of the program when the targeted students are in kindergarten, they participate in the school and home visits, with a special emphasis on the learning and behavioral skills they're working on in the classroom.

Renda Baggett, one of the five teachers and five paraprofessionals who volunteered for the program, is sold on it.

"I thoroughly believe in home visits," she says. "If you can see your students at home where they're comfortable, you know where they're coming from. You can understand them so much better."

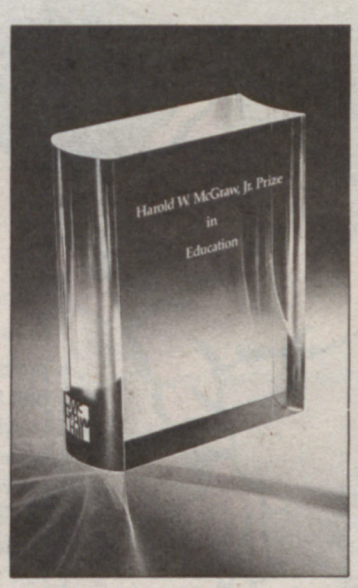
Baggett's involvement, for which she is paid, helps the young children begin to associate school with positive experiences—from an early age. The more positive their view of school, logic dictates, the less likely they are to drop out as teens.

"We've seen too many examples of kids who get turned off and quit school," says Baggett. "They need to get support from their parents and experience success early, so they'll stay in school. That's what this program's all about."

—Vicky Lytle

The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education

Three who make a difference: Announcing the 1990 winners of the McGraw Prize in Education.



The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. prize was established in 1988, in celebration of McGraw-Hill's 100th anniversary and in honor of our chairman emeritus.

Each year, up to three $25,000 prizes are awarded to people who have made a difference in education.

For 1990, the Board of Judges selected these three individuals for distinguished contributions to the advancement of education.

James P. Comer, M.D.

Turning symbols of despair into models of hope, James P. Comer has helped produce exemplary results in the difficult environment of urban public education.

Poor children often fail academically because they don't develop social mainstream skills and schools are not prepared to help, Dr. Comer says. He developed the Comer Process at the Yale Child Study Center to reverse the trend. The program refocuses teacher training, provides mental health guidance and implements parent-school partnerships—all to build children's confidence and competence.

The 42 public schools in New Haven, Connecticut, use his methods, as do more than 100 others in eight states. The results: a better learning climate, dramatically reduced behavioral problems and climbing achievement levels.

Clark Kerr

Clark Kerr was a major force in the transformation of American higher education after World War II.

Dr. Kerr recognized, long before the need, the emerging educational requirements of a booming California population and a rapidly changing society. As president of the University of California from 1958-1967, Dr. Kerr created a system renowned for intellectual excellence, pioneering research and quality education at reasonable cost. Today, more than 160,000 students at the university's nine campuses are nurtured by this environment.

Great achievements cannot be attributed easily to any individual, but behind the University of California are the intelligence, resourcefulness and vision of Clark Kerr.

Dr. Richard C. Wallace, Jr.

Richard C. Wallace restored public confidence in Pittsburgh's public schools during the 1980s by building alliances with business and teachers, and starting programs that had a strong impact on student achievement and the dropout rate.

Under the umbrella of the Excellence Program, Pittsburgh schools monitor student achievement and teacher effectiveness through systematic planning, instruction and testing. Teachers grow through mentoring and staff-evaluation programs that serve as a beacon for other school systems. Nationally acclaimed magnet schools and other special programs attract students who once fled to private schools.

As superintendent of schools, Dr. Wallace has infused the community with faith in local schools and reliance on the efficacy of educational reform.

For more information, write to The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education, McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

ARE YOU COVERED?

Those Americans who have health insurance are paying astronomical premiums. Another 30 million Americans have no coverage at all.

Health care spending in the United States soared from $240 billion to $640 billion in the past decade.

Over that same 10-year period, the cost of health care rose, on average, 10.4 percent a year, nearly twice as fast as the consumer price index. And the number of uninsured Americans grew from 25 million to as many as 37 million.

In the next 10 years, per capita health care spending could top $5,500 a year—more than twice today's level. It seems there's no end in sight.

All this means people must make the most of their health care dollars.

The strategy for getting the best coverage at the lowest cost depends upon where you are in your career.

Before retirement. If both spouses work, your family probably has overlapping coverage. If either of you has to pay some or all of the premium, dropping one policy might make economic sense. You should base your decision on two factors.

First, the stability of your jobs and family. If one of you drops coverage and the other becomes unemployed, the family would be left unprotected. The same could happen in case of death or divorce. Redundancy creates security.

Second, something called the "coordination of benefits" rule often lets spouses combine policies to get 100 percent coverage (no deductibles or co-payments) for their children. See whether the deductibles and co-payments required by one policy are likely to add up to more than the premium you'd pay for the second. One warning: more and more plans are eliminating this bonus, so read your policy carefully.

Upon retirement. If you retire before age 65, follow this rule: Don't let go of what you're holding until you've got hold of something else. Becoming sick or injured while you're without coverage could easily wipe out your retirement savings.

Your group plan probably has a conversion clause that outlines how and when you can switch to an individual plan. If not, the federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) allows you to keep your group plan for 18 months—but you pay the premium. Costs may be high, but at least you'll be covered as you shop for better prices.

Most states also have laws governing your right to continue your old coverage and/or convert to an individual policy. In addition, 24 states have pools that provide insurance for those who can't qualify on the open market. For more information, check with your state's insurance commission.

When you shop for an individual health insurance policy, remember that what's *not* covered is more important than what is. Notice especially any exclusions for preexisting medical conditions and any other exclusions, like treatment for alcohol abuse or mental illness.

Upon approaching age 65. Before you're 65, start the paperwork to get your Medicare card. Then start looking for a Medigap policy—a private policy designed to plug the many holes in Medicare. A new law forbids insurers to deny coverage or to charge higher rates to anyone purchasing a policy within six months of becoming eligible for Medicare Part B benefits. The same law also provides penalties for any company selling older persons too much insurance, although regulations as to the meaning of that provision are not yet in place.

Only the very wealthy or the very poor should go without a Medigap policy. Starting in 1991, people on Medicare alone must pay up to a $628 deductible for their first 60 days in the hospital, up to $4,710 for the next 30 days, $296 a day for the rest of their "lifetime reserve days," and all expenses after that.

They must also pay for 20 percent of physician fees after a $100 deductible, 100 percent of the cost of blood, and a portion of post-hospital nursing and hospice care.

But don't overinsure. One good Medigap policy is enough. United Seniors—a health cooperative and nonprofit consumer organization that helps older persons make informed choices on health matters—claims that many unscrupulous agents sell duplicate coverages to unwary consumers, adding up to $1,250 to premiums without improving protection.

At all times. Never take health insurance for granted. Understand what your policy does and doesn't cover, and what precautions you should take (getting second medical opinions, for example).

Always use the proper claim forms. If your claim is denied, don't give up. Call or write your insurance company for a review. Sometimes it helps to have your doctor call to explain your situation. If all else fails, contact your state insurance commissioner.

Always check your medical bills before submitting them. In one study, the General Accounting Office of the U.S. Congress found that 99 percent of the bills it examined contained mistakes, most of them overcharges.

Being a member of NEA-Retired can make managing your health insurance a little easier. One membership benefit is the availability of the NEA MemberCare Medicare Supplement Plan (part of the NEA MemberCare Plan), available to any Association member age 65 or older.

For more information, contact the NEA Special Services Response Center, 51 Monroe St., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850 (800-637-4636).

NEA-R Member Concerns

Retired members, like all Americans, are concerned about the ever-rising cost of medical insurance.

And they worry perhaps more than most about how they'd pay for treatment of a catastrophic illness or for long-term care, for themselves or a family member. The next Congress will be dealing with these and almost all other aspects of health care when it looks at legislation reflecting the recommendations of the Pepper Commission on Comprehensive Health Care.

NEA supports the Commission's recommendations, which include:

- ► establishment of a public health care program with subsidies for low-income participants and limits on out-of-pocket costs.
- ► establishment of a requirement that businesses with more than 100 workers cover employees and their dependents through either private health insurance or participation in a public plan.
- ► incentives for smaller businesses to provide health insurance for employees and dependents.
- ► creation of a new program to provide home care and nursing home coverage, meeting federal quality standards, to chronically ill persons.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

GOING IT ALONE

Paying for her daughter's college education is single parent Laurice Slaughter's number one goal. Second of two parts.

Paul Aiken

Jonnice Slaughter, 15, has wanted to be a pediatrician ever since she was three years old. "At first I thought it was just because she was happy that she could pronounce such a big word," says her mother, Laurice. But when Jonnice held fast, her mother decided to do her best to help her.

Laurice teaches ninth grade algebra at Plaza Junior High in Virginia Beach, Virginia. A single parent, she believes strongly in setting personal and financial goals. Right now, her two major goals are to buy a new home, hopefully in the next several years, and to educate her daughter, who will be ready to start college in 1993.

Jonnice would like to go to Howard University in Washington or Spelman College in Atlanta, both private schools. She'll probably work summers to help with college costs. "But I'd prefer that she not have to work during the school year," her mother says.

Laurice estimates that college might cost $13,000 or $14,000 a year. She's collected some information from Howard University, but she hasn't yet looked into the possibility of financial aid for Jonnice or thought about how she will pay for college.

Some help is available for her, though. The College Cost Explorer, a software program developed by the College Board, provides cost data on tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses for some 2,800 colleges around the country.* The program also helps you estimate your expected family contribution toward college costs and determine whether your child might be eligible for financial aid. Then it gives you the details on financial aid awards at all the colleges listed.

One of the first steps in using the program is to calculate what's called the Expected Family Contribution or EFC. Colleges use this figure—based on family income, assets, family size, and other indications of how much your family might be able to contribute to college costs—to determine your "need" for financial aid.

Once you plug in all your own statistics, the software program figures your EFC. Next, you look up the annual cost of the colleges your child wants to attend. When you subtract your EFC from the cost, you have the amount of "need" or the financial aid your child would be eligible for at each college.

Of course, that doesn't mean that someone is offering your child that money. But it does mean that, if your child applies for aid, chances are good that he or she will be judged to have that level of financial need.

From the program, you'll learn that each college freshman is expected to contribute $700 toward his or her own costs. From there, you use a computer worksheet to determine how much the parents are expected to contribute, based on their income, the number of other children in school and college, medical needs, tax obligations, retirement needs, and so forth.

To see how the program works, consider that after Laurice plugs in her salary of $40,500 and all of her allowable deductions are taken from it, she is considered to have available income of $17,221.

She must then consider the value of her assets, such as the equity in her home, savings accounts, and investments. The computer calculates how much additional available income this would give her. In Laurice's case it is $960, which boosts her available income for Jonnice's college expenses each year to $18,181.

The program points out that this figure does not indicate how much cash she has on hand to help Jonnice through college. Laurice has nowhere near $18,000! And it would be self-defeating for her to sell her home to capture the equity and put Jonnice through school. The formula simply provides a measure of the family's overall capacity to help with college.

In the Slaughters' case, the program shows that, based on Laurice's income, she will be expected to contribute $5,210 a year toward Jonnice's education. Because Jonnice is expected to contribute a minimum of $700, the family's contribution comes to $5,910 a year.

Although the formula may be found wanting in some ways, it's the formula colleges use, so Laurice—and other parents, too—may as well understand how it works and determine how to best make use of it.

Once the Slaughters have worked through this exercise and know what college financial aid officers will expect them to contribute, they can take the next step and find out what the colleges actually cost. Because Jonnice has already selected the two schools of her choice, this is an easy exercise.

The program shows this breakdown for Howard University for 1989-90:

Tuition & fees	**$5,330**
Books & supplies	**560**
Room & board	**3,160**
Transportation	**180**
Personal expenses	**2,250**
Total budget	**$11,480**
Estimated EFC	**-5,910**
Estimated need	**$5,570**

What this indicates is that, if Jonnice attends Howard University, the Slaughters will have an estimated need of $5,570 a year. This does not mean, of course, that Howard University is prepared to give them that amount.

In fact, if the Slaughters move on to what the program calls the "Financial Aid Profile" at Howard, they'll learn that only 30 percent of the freshmen who attend Howard receive financial aid.

Of those, about half receive grants and scholarships and the other half loans. A few receive jobs. The program also indicates whether the school accepts credit card payment or installment payments. Howard does not.

Spelman College in Atlanta, Jonnice's other choice, is a little more expensive than Howard. The total budget for a freshman is $12,070, according to the program—$590 more than Howard.

But at Spelman, 81 percent of the freshmen receive aid, according to the program. The program also indicates that 360 freshmen applied for financial aid, 340 were judged to have financial need, and 315 were offered financial aid.

From this profile of the two schools, the Slaughters can see that Jonnice has a better chance of getting financial aid at Spelman than she does at Howard.

The program also contains a section that leads the user through the steps of applying for financial aid. Although this doesn't solve all of Laurice's problems, it gives her an idea of what will be involved in sending Jonnice to college. "If this is what she wants to do, I'll sure give it a good try," Laurice says.

—Mary Rowland

Laurice Slaughter's Net Worth

Assets	
House	$87,000
87 Peugeot	10,000
Bank CDs	2,800
Credit Union	1,000
Checking account	750
Tax-sheltered annuity	4,500
TOTAL	**$106,050**
Liabilities	
Mortgage	$49,000
Car loan	4,000
TOTAL	**$53,000**
Net Worth	$53,050

*The program costs $59.95 plus $2.95 postage and handling. Credit card orders: call: 1-800-323-7155; all others: 212-713-8165.

YOU AND THE LAW

Association Sues School District Over Drug Tests

Lawsuit challenges "reasonable cause" drug testing of public school employees.

In a case with national implications, the Wyoming Education Association (WEA) has filed suit against the Laramie County School District. WEA is challenging a new drug testing program that grants the school administration virtually unbridled discretion to order school employees to be tested for evidence of drugs or alcohol in their urine.

An employee who refuses to be tested is subject to immediate discipline, including possible termination.

The Cheyenne Teachers Education Association joined the WEA as a plaintiff in the lawsuit, which was filed in federal district court December 11, 1990.

More than 100 court challenges to drug testing programs have been filed since President Ronald Reagan's 1986 Executive Order requiring federal agencies to test employees in "sensitive" positions.

The courts have made clear that only people in "safety sensitive" positions—for example, airline pilots, railroad engineers, nuclear power plant workers—are subject to *random* tests.

Judges have struck down random testing of a wide range of public employees including teachers, secretaries, lawyers, meat inspectors, and clerical workers. As a result, few, if any, school districts have tried to impose random testing on any employees except school bus drivers.

Many school districts have instead chosen to push for "reasonable cause" testing. Under this kind of program, an administrator can order any employee to be tested if there's "reasonable cause" to believe the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The WEA lawsuit is the first case in the country challenging "reasonable cause" testing of public school employees. The lawsuit charges that the new policy gives the school administration "totally unfettered arbitrary authority" to order testing.

Laramie County has given school administrators a handy checklist to fill out when they suspect an employee of drug or alcohol abuse. According to the list, the following symptoms characterize abusers—so any of them is "reasonable cause" for ordering a test:

- reduced quantity and quality of work
- a significant change in relations with co-workers, supervisors and others
- frequent arguments
- changes in personal appearance
- complaints from co-workers.

As WEA argues in papers filed with the court, the administration could use virtually any change in job performance or relationships with others to justify a drug test. And any of these "symptoms" could arise from purely innocent causes that have absolutely nothing to do with drug or alcohol use.

Significantly, an employee suspected of being a drug user and ordered to submit to a test has no right to respond to the allegation or explain why the administrator's assertion of "reasonable cause" is erroneous.

Instead, the policy provides that refusal to submit to testing "shall be treated as a positive test rendering the employee unqualified to do his or her job" and subject to immediate discipline.

WEA alleges that the absence of any opportunity to contest the "reasonable cause" determination constitutes a violation of due process.

The lawsuit challenges other aspects of the new Laramie County policy as well. One provision requires testing any employee who's involved in an accident that results in $500 worth of damages or any personal injury requiring medical attention.

Because drug tests aren't 100 percent accurate, and because certain purely lawful substances—such as ibuprofen, antihistamines, and poppy seeds—can cause false positive results on initial drug screening tests, there's a very real possibility that innocent school employees will be falsely accused of being drug users.

For these reasons and others, NEA opposes mandatory drug testing.

—Michael Simpson
NEA Office of the General Counsel

At NEA Today presstime, the Laramie County school board had decided not to implement its controversial drug testing program pending the outcome of negotiations with the Association.

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Business Week	XVFB	39.95	27.95	New York Magazine (1 yr - 50 iss)	UARY	39.00	24.00
Car & Driver	AJNM	19.94	9.97	Omni	GJDA	24.00	15.96
Ebony	FNGY	16.00	12.00	Parents	NDFG	20.00	12.95
Entertainment Weekly	**Y7HM**	**51.48**	**25.95**	PC Magazine (1 yr - 22 iss)	QDB3	44.97	24.97
Esquire	HD8W	15.94	7.97	Penthouse	J44D	36.00	30.00
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Golf Digest	47RD	23.94	14.97	Runner's World	M7PY	24.00	17.97
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McCalls	**X9E4**	**19.97**	**9.99**	Vanity Fair	R978	15.00	11.97
Mirabella ***NEW!***	F6KT	24.00	12.00	Working Woman	674T	18.00	9.97
Motor Trend	XJCU	19.94	11.95	YM Magazine (1 yr - 10 iss)	QC78	18.00	9.97

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NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

NEA Starts '90s In Strong Fiscal Condition

A Report from NEA Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan

Continuing membership growth has propelled NEA into the '90s. And, as in the '80s, the Association is in strong financial shape to meet the challenges ahead.

Because of the increase in membership, NEA's revenues in the fiscal year ending August 31, 1990, exceeded budget projections. The resulting increase in the Association's fund balance continues to ensure a stable financial environment.

This measure of financial security was accomplished through the vigilant efforts of state affiliates and NEA leadership. In these pages you'll find a complete report of NEA's financial statements for 1989-90, as audited by our certified public accounting firm, Coopers & Lybrand.

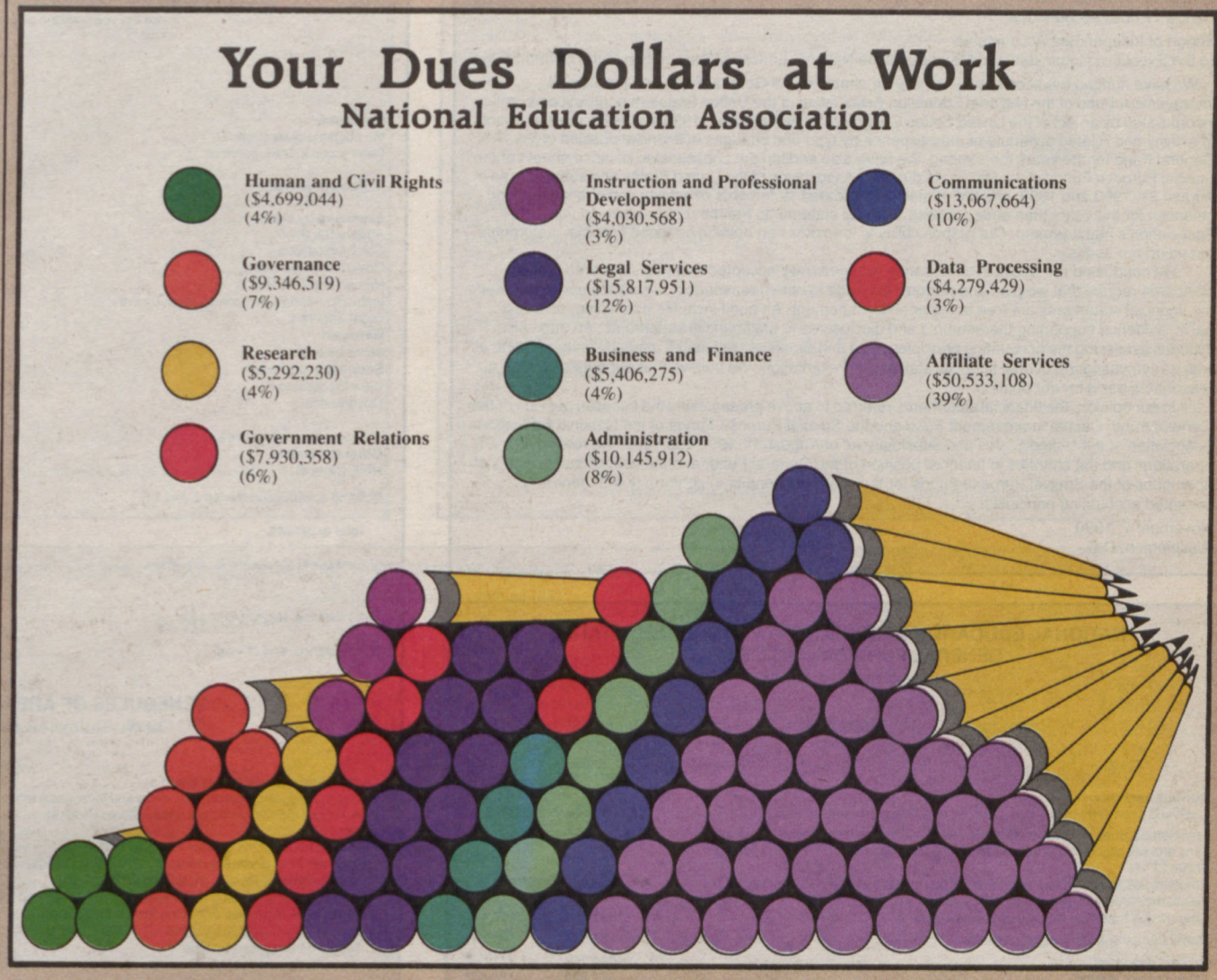
You won't need an accounting degree to read this report, but I believe a few interpretive comments from me might be helpful.

The report on pages 34-35 is divided into three parts.

► First, a clean opinion letter from the auditors stating that the audit was conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and that the financial statements present fairly the financial position and results of operations.

► Second, the actual financial statements on which the audit by Coopers & Lybrand is based.

► Third, 11 footnotes to the balance sheets and statements of activity, which help explain some of the individual items.


Your Dues Dollars at Work
National Education Association
Human and Civil Rights ($4,699,044) (4%)
Instruction and Professional Development ($4,030,568) (3%)
Communications ($13,067,664) (10%)
Governance ($9,346,519) (7%)
Legal Services ($15,817,951) (12%)
Data Processing ($4,279,429) (3%)
Research ($5,292,230) (4%)
Business and Finance ($5,406,275) (4%)
Affiliate Services ($50,533,108) (39%)
Government Relations ($7,930,358) (6%)
Administration ($10,145,912) (8%)

Turning to the general fund statements of activity (page 34), you'll note in the column headed *1990 Actual* that our total revenues were $137,881,630—an increase of $2,192,130 over our projected budget. Overall, this statement shows that each area's expenses were very close to the amounts budgeted.

The chart on this page illustrates the various NEA budget areas, showing both total dollars allotted and percentage of the dues dollar each accounts for. In case you're not familiar with some of these areas, here's a brief explanation of each.

Affiliate Services plans, implements, and integrates NEA programs and services to affiliates. Nearly $38 million of NEA expenditures go directly to affiliates to implement projects and to help maintain the more than 1,380 UniServ professionals who provide the on-site assistance members need.

Legal Services funds employment-related legal cases for members and locals, and also protects every NEA member with $1 million in professional liability insurance.

Governance supports the Association's democratic decision-making process by funding the efficient operation of the Representative Assembly and other governance bodies.

Research provides analyses that help chart the Association's course toward educational excellence. Research also offers NEA affiliates, media, other organizations, and lawmakers in-depth data and reports.

Data Processing provides the technical support to accurately maintain the Association's membership records, research operations, office automation, and financial data through sophisticated computers based in Washington, D.C.

Human and Civil Rights guides a wide variety of information, training, and awards programs designed to help guarantee every child and school employee equal access and opportunity in education and employment.

Government Relations is responsible for maintaining NEA's status as the nation's most visible and effective advocate for education before Congress, federal agencies, and organizations that represent state lawmakers and officials. Political Affairs staff coordinate the Association's activities to support and elect friends of public education to public office.

Instruction and Professional Development provides programs and services to help all school employees reach their full professional potential. IPD also tracks and analyzes key education reform issues, including certification, evaluation, and site-based decision-making.

Business and Finance makes sure the hard-earned dues dollars of NEA members are handled in an efficient, effective, and businesslike fashion; maintains up-to-date and accurate records of all 2 million NEA members; and provides support services to numerous state affiliates.

Administration provides overall supervision and execution of all Association programs, provides staff support for NEA officers and governance bodies, maintains Association property, and coordinates employee relations.

Communications keeps members up to date through *NEA Today* and other publications and presents the Association's message to the public through the print and broadcast news media and a national advertising campaign.

So, what's the bottom line? You'll find in the balance sheets on page 35 that NEA's total assets as of last August 31 amounted to $74,541,247.

These assets consist primarily of membership dues receivable from various state affiliates ($18,922,558); cash and short-term investments ($12,057,363); and funds expended as of that date for the renovation of our headquarters building ($33,563,950), which will ultimately be transferred to the capital improvement fund.

After deducting area expenses ($130,549,058), funding for the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education ($2,300,000), and non-capital building expenses ($4,239,817), we show an excess of revenues over expenses of $792,755. That amount was added to the beginning general fund balance to arrive at our ending fund balance, which now equals $26,840,956.

Marilyn Monahan was elected NEA Secretary-Treasurer at last year's Representative Assembly. She is past president of NEA-New Hampshire and formerly taught elementary school in Goffstown, New Hampshire.

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

Audited Financial Statements

Coopers & Lybrand
Certified Public Accountants

Report of Independent Accountants
To the Executive Committee and Members of the National Education Association of the United States

We have audited the accompanying balance sheets of the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund of the National Education Association of the United States (a nonprofit corporation incorporated by an Act of the United States Congress) as of August 31, 1990 and 1989, the statements of activity and related schedule of area expense by type and changes in financial position of the General Fund for the years then ended. We have also audited the consolidated balance sheets of the Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1990 and 1989, and the related consolidated statements of activity and changes in fund balances for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly the financial position of the General Fund, Capital Improvement Fund and the Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1990 and 1989, the results of operations and the changes in financial position of the General Fund, and the consolidated results of operations of the Special Purpose Funds for the years then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

November 7, 1990
Washington, D.C.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL FUND BALANCE SHEETS
August 31, 1990 and 1989

ASSETS

	1990	1989
Current Assets:		
Cash and short-term investments at cost, which approximates market	$12,057,363	$12,007,510
Membership dues receivable from state associations, net of reserves for cancellations and uncollectible amounts of $852,466 in 1990 and $1,170,763 in 1989 (Note 2)	18,922,558	18,599,940
Amounts due from affiliates and other organizations, net of reserve for bad debts of $59,926 in 1990 and $60,426 in 1989 (Notes 2 and 3)	763,515	803,964
Amount due from Special Purpose Funds (Note 2)	1,638,250	2,166,477
Publication and advertising receivables	124,581	145,139
Prepaid expenses	1,894,369	1,971,546
Other current assets	974,925	725,833
Total current assets	36,375,561	36,420,409
Long-Term Assets:		
Equipment, at cost, less accumulated depreciation of $9,555,707 in 1990 and $9,412,507 in 1989 (Note 2)	1,214,924	154,934
Notes receivable and other assets	3,386,812	1,388,925
Deferred building construction costs (Notes 2, 9 and 11)	33,563,950	16,407,844
Total long-term assets	38,165,686	17,951,703
Total general fund assets	$74,541,247	$54,372,112

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

	1990	1989
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$12,704,906	$11,086,989
Accrued fringe benefits	3,949,924	3,650,182
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations (Note 3)	181,175	101,373
Total current liabilities	16,836,005	14,838,544
Long-Term Liabilities:		
Accrued severance pay (Note 2)	3,227,484	2,826,039
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds (Note 2)	10,736,802	7,759,328
Construction loan payable (Note 11)	16,900,000	2,900,000
Total long-term liabilities	30,864,286	13,485,367
Total general fund liabilities	47,700,291	28,323,911
Commitments and contingencies (Notes 5, 6, 7, 9 and 11)		
Fund balance	26,840,956	26,048,201
Total general fund liabilities and fund balance	$74,541,247	$54,372,112

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

GENERAL FUND STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY
for the years ended August 31, 1990 and 1989

	1990 Budget (Unaudited)	1990 Actual	1989 Actual
Revenues:			
Membership dues (Note 2)	$135,189,500	$136,862,755	$126,403,106
Other income, fees, services	500,000	1,018,875	753,901
Total revenues	135,689,500	137,881,630	127,157,007
Expenses by area:			
Affiliate Services	49,974,286	50,533,108	46,695,606
Communications	13,181,198	13,067,664	12,459,827
Government Relations	7,834,161	7,930,358	7,172,954
Human and Civil Rights	4,632,824	4,699,044	4,395,368
Instruction and Professional Development	4,332,325	4,030,568	3,818,234
Legal Services	15,772,430	15,817,951	13,581,240
Research	5,910,619	5,292,230	5,547,511
Administration	10,339,747	10,145,912	9,673,570
Business and Finance	5,454,420	5,406,275	5,102,106
Data Processing	4,614,568	4,279,429	4,032,341
Governance	9,091,077	9,346,519	8,666,737
Total expenses by area	131,137,655	130,549,058	121,145,494
Other expenses:			
NFIE (Note 8)	2,300,000	2,300,000	2,300,000
Building construction (Notes 2 and 11)	2,250,000	4,239,817	1,799,701
Total expenses	135,687,655	137,088,875	125,245,195
Excess of revenues over expenses	$ 1,845	792,755	1,911,812
Fund balance, beginning of year		26,048,201	24,136,389
Fund balance, end of year		$ 26,840,956	$ 26,048,201

SCHEDULES OF AREA EXPENSES BY TYPE
for the years ended August 31, 1990 and 1989

	1990	1989
Salaries and benefits (Notes 2 and 5)	$ 40,426,232	$ 37,784,664
Grants to, and joint projects with, state and local associations	37,732,395	34,809,654
Kate Frank/DuShane Program expenditures (Note 4)	9,314,891	8,861,594
Travel	13,081,146	11,792,064
Publications costs, net of advertising income	3,793,940	4,498,164
Outside services (including consultants, legal and audit)	17,348,640	15,062,129
Machinery rentals, repairs, materials and supplies	1,850,267	1,962,105
Office expenses (including telephone, office supplies and utilities)	3,897,848	3,347,394
Administrative expenses (including insurance and rent)	3,103,699	3,027,726
Total area expenses by type	$130,549,058	$121,145,494

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

GENERAL FUND STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION
for the years ended August 31, 1990 and 1989

	1990	1989
Sources of cash and short-term investments:		
From operations:		
Excess of revenues over expenses	$ 792,755	$1,911,812
Increase (decrease) in excess of revenues over expenses from noncash revenues and expenses:		
Depreciation and amortization	143,201	637,475
Membership dues receivable	(322,618)	84,297
Publication and advertising receivables	20,558	18,620
Prepaid expenses	77,177	(525,017)
Accrued severance pay	401,445	497,477
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,617,917	1,128,940
Accrued fringe benefits	299,742	601,897
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds, net	3,505,701	3,292,057
Cash and short-term investments provided from operations	6,535,878	7,647,558
Other sources:		
Construction loan proceeds	14,000,000	2,900,000
Total sources of cash and short-term investments	20,535,878	10,547,558
Uses of cash and short-term investments:		
Advances to (repayment from) affiliates and other organizations, net	(40,449)	256,064
Purchase of equipment	1,203,191	33,590
Increase in other assets, net	2,246,979	141,789
Increase in deferred building construction costs	17,156,106	10,660,991
Amounts held for affiliates and other organizations	(79,802)	41,493
Total uses of cash and short-term investments	20,486,025	11,133,927
Net increase (decrease) in cash and short-term investments	49,853	(586,369)
Cash and short-term investments, beginning of year	12,007,510	12,593,879
Cash and short-term investments, end of year	$12,057,363	$12,007,510

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NEA FINANCIAL REPORT

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND BALANCE SHEETS

August 31, 1990 and 1989

ASSETS

	1990	1989
Cash	$ 1,335	$ 1,265
Land, at cost	1,753,777	1,753,777
Building, at cost, less accumulated depreciation of $7,005,871 in 1990 and $6,766,878 in 1989 (Notes 2 and 11)	4,891,926	5,130,919
Total capital improvement fund assets	$6,647,038	$6,885,961

FUND BALANCE

Fund balance (Note 2)	$6,647,038	$6,885,961
Total capital improvement fund balance	$6,647,038	$6,885,961

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS

August 31, 1990 and 1989

ASSETS

	1990	1989
Cash	$ 1,228,163	$ 504,603
Accounts receivable	4,191,820	4,049,847
Note receivable - affiliate (Note 6)	1,068,417	–
Prepaid expenses	76,950	55,730
Leasehold improvements, furniture and equipment, at cost, net of accumulated depreciation of $826,209 in 1990 and $636,804 in 1989	291,313	346,559
Total current assets	6,856,663	4,956,739
Amount due from general fund (Note 2)	10,736,802	7,759,328
Total special purpose funds assets	$17,593,465	$12,716,067

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

Liabilities:		
Note payable (Note 6)	$ 1,068,417	$ –
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	2,821,654	1,519,416
Amount due to general fund (Note 2)	1,638,250	2,166,477
Total current liabilities	5,528,321	3,685,893
Deferred Income NEA-Retired Program (Note 2)	1,930,307	1,596,262
Accrued post-retirement health-care benefits (Notes 2 and 5)	6,213,822	4,533,151
Total long-term liabilities	8,144,129	6,129,413
Total special purpose funds liabilities	13,672,450	9,815,306
Fund balances	3,921,015	2,900,761
Total special purpose funds liabilities and fund balances	$17,593,465	$12,716,067

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES

for the years ended August 31, 1990 and 1989

	Fund balances August 31, 1988	Revenues: NEA appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund balances August 31, 1989	Revenues: NEA appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund balances August 31, 1990
UniServ Fund (Note 2)	$ 495,234	$25,038,195	$ –	$25,414,508	$ 118,921	$27,352,370	$ –	$26,600,325	$ 870,966
Special Services and Education Travel Trust Funds	859,328	–	16,157,802	15,837,241	1,179,889	–	15,253,429	15,271,228	1,162,090
National Education Employees Assistance Fund (Note 7)	93,240	100,000	3,184	87,497	108,927	155,000	5,916	221,091	48,752
NEA-Retired Program Fund (Note 2)	1,074,586	443,947	441,509	467,018	1,493,024	369,537	496,182	519,536	1,839,207
	$2,522,388	$25,582,142	$16,602,495	$41,806,264	$2,900,761	$27,876,907	$15,755,527	$42,612,180	$3;921,015

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. ORGANIZATION

The National Education Association of the United States (NEA) is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under a special Act of the United States Congress. The purpose of NEA is to elevate the character and advance the interests of the profession of teaching and to promote the cause of education in the United States.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of presentation
The financial statements of NEA have been prepared on the accrual basis. To ensure observance with its bylaws, the resources of NEA are classified for accounting and reporting purposes into funds established according to their nature and purpose. The assets, liabilities, fund balances and changes in fund balances are reported in the following fund groups:

General Fund
The bylaws of NEA provide that the General Fund shall comprise all income received in the form of dues, interest, dividends, fees, earnings from advertising, sales of NEA publications and payments for services and funds received by gift, bequest, devise or transfer to NEA, which are not specifically designated for deposit in the Capital Improvement Fund. All operating accounts and debt services shall be paid out of the General Fund.

Capital Improvement Fund
The bylaws of NEA provide that the Capital Improvement Fund shall comprise the properties and permanent investment of NEA and other funds, or properties received by gift, devise, bequest or transfer for deposit in the Fund.

Disbursement from the Capital Improvement Fund to acquire new properties or to provide for major long-term improvements in existing properties, must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. Expenditures from this Fund for any other purpose must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Assembly.

Special Purpose Funds
NEA has various Special Purpose Funds which consist of restricted funds or funds designated for specific projects and purposes. Special Purpose Funds include activities such as the UniServ Fund, NEA-Retired Program Fund, accrued post-retirement healthcare benefits, and the administration of various services such as insurance plans for members. These funds also include the activity of Member Benefits Corporation (MBC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of NEA. MBC provides support to the Special Services and Educational Travel Trust Funds primarily in the areas of membership services, affiliate support, marketing and training.

General Fund budget
The budget of NEA is designed to achieve the goals and objectives of NEA. The budget amounts included in the statements of General Fund activity are as approved by NEA's Representative Assembly and amended by the Board of Directors, as set forth in the guidelines approved by the Representative Assembly and the Board of Directors.

NEA-Retired Program
During 1982, NEA began offering life memberships to retired members through a new special purpose fund known as the NEA-Retired Program. Payments to the fund qualify retired members for the regular services provided to active members, as well as services designed specifically for retired persons. Payments to the fund are recorded as deferred income when received and amortized over the estimated life expectancy of its members.

Property, equipment and depreciation
NEA records depreciation on its building in the Capital Improvement Fund. This depreciation is recorded using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the building of 50 years. Depreciation on the building was approximately $239,000 in 1990 and 1989, reflecting the change to the Capital Improvement Fund balance.

NEA capitalizes equipment with a cost in excess of $2,500 in the General Fund and depreciates these assets using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the assets.

Deferred building renovation costs and expenses
Construction, architectural, design, engineering services and construction-period interest costs related to the renovation of the building have been recorded as deferred costs in the General Fund. The accumulated costs will be transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund when construction is completed. Amounts incurred during construction related to asbestos removal, moving and facilities rental expenses have been expensed as incurred.

Membership dues
Membership dues are recognized as income over the membership year, which is September 1 through August 31. Dues are assessed to members as provided in the bylaws. An estimated provision for uncollectibles, write-offs and cancellations is charged against membership dues revenues.

In accordance with the bylaws, a percentage of the membership dues is allocated to UniServ grants, (which are included in the expenses of affiliate services), whereby NEA provides grants to affiliates to assist in funding their staff representatives whose responsibilities are to implement, improve and coordinate programs of NEA.

Employee benefit plans
NEA has a policy entitling employees with over 10 years of service to severance pay equal to 10 weeks of salary. NEA recognizes the liability for severance pay at the time the employee reaches 10 years of employment and is entitled to the severance pay.

Pension plan expense is funded and expensed as contributions are due and payable.

Post-retirement health care and life insurance benefits for present retirees is expensed when the premiums are payable. Pursuant to Financial Accounting Standards Board Technical Bulletin No. 87-1, NEA has adopted an accrual method of accounting for future benefits to be provided to retirees and qualified active employees (see note 5).

3. GOVERNANCE AFFILIATES, NONGOVERNANCE AFFILIATES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

NEA provides various administrative services and acts as custodian for the funds of certain Governance and Nongovernance Affiliates and other organizations, which also offer services to members of NEA and to other educators. However, each of these organizations has a separate Board of Directors and operates independently of NEA. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements present the financial activity of NEA exclusive of these organizations, except for the funds held by or due to NEA as custodian.

4. KATE FRANK/DUSHANE PROGRAM

The Kate Frank/DuShane Program (the Program) was established by the Representative Assembly to protect the human, civil and professional rights of school employees. The major project of the Program, the Unified Legal Services Program, provides reimbursement for legal assistance to educational employees in matters related to their employment.

5. RETIREMENT BENEFITS

NEA participates in a multiemployer, defined-benefit noncontributory retirement plan, which covers substantially all permanent employees. Approximately 70% of the employees covered under the plan are employed by NEA; the remaining 30% are employees of various state and local affiliates of NEA. NEA's policy is to fund retirement costs accrued.

NEA's retirement contribution expense for the fiscal year ended 1990 was approximately $2,154,500. For the fiscal year ended 1989, no expense was recognized as no contributions were made to the retirement plan since it was fully funded. The accumulated plan benefits and plan net assets available for benefits as of the date of the latest actuarial valuation are presented below:

	January 1 1990	January 1 1989
Actuarial present value of accumulated benefits:		
Vested	$ 71,111,281	$ 49,979,646
Nonvested	12,293,699	7,355,097
	$ 83,404,980	$ 57,334,743
Net assets available for benefits	$127,281,219	$112,080,290

The increase in the actuarial present value of accumulated benefits reflects plan amendments including a standard cost of living adjustment for retirement benefits.

The actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits ignores the effects of future compensation increases on the benefits that participants will receive for their past service. If this value is adjusted for projected salary increases, consistent with the assumed rate of return, the adjusted actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits would be approximately $118,808,000 and $83,336,000 as of January 1, 1990 and 1989, respectively.

The assumed rate of return used in determining the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was 8% for both 1990 and 1989. As of January 1, 1989, the retirement plan had no unfunded liabilities.

NEA's employee's are also eligible to participate in the 401(k) Salary Reduction Plan of the National Education Association (the Plan) in which the employee can make voluntary, tax-deferred contributions within specified limits. The Plan was established under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code Subsection 401(k) and has received a favorable determination as to its tax status. NEA's contributions to the Plan are based on a set percentage of employee contributions which amounted to $487,230 and $351,859 for the years ended August 31, 1990 and 1989, respectively.

In addition to providing pension benefits, NEA provides various post-retirement health care and life insurance benefits for retirees. Substantially, all of NEA's employees are eligible for these benefits upon retirement. The annual cost for providing such benefits to current retirees is expensed as the premiums are payable, and amounted to approximately $530,000 for fiscal year 1990 and $515,000 for fiscal year 1989.

NEA has adopted an accrual method of accounting to provide for future payment of post-retirement health care benefits. In order to accrue for the estimated obligation to provide such benefits for present retirees and eligible active employees upon retirement over an estimated period of 10 to 12 years, approximately $1,700,000 and $2,700,000 in fiscal year 1990 and 1989, respectively, was accrued and expensed in the General Fund. This obligation, amounting to $6,213,822 and $4,533,151, is included as a liability in the Special Purpose Funds as of August 31, 1990 and 1989.

6. BANK LINE OF CREDIT

NEA has a line of credit of $4,000,000 which was increased to $12,500,000 as of October 26, 1990 from a commercial bank at the bank's prime interest rate. As of August 31, 1990, the bank's prime interest rate was 10% per annum. As of August 31, 1990, $1,068,417 was borrowed against this line on behalf of NEEAF to assist in funding a local affiliate, who will repay this amount to NEEAF. On October 2, 1990, the bank assigned the amount borrowed under NEA's line of credit to NEEAF under a new loan agreement between NEEAF and the bank which NEA guaranteed. There was no borrowing against the line during the year ended August 31, 1989.

7. NATIONAL EDUCATION EMPLOYEES ASSISTANCE FUND, INC.

The National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc. (NEEAF), formerly the National Teachers Assistance Fund, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation established for the purpose of providing financial and other assistance to member organizations and their individual members involved in disputes over terms and conditions of employment. In this capacity, NEEAF, from time to time, has guaranteed loans made by lending institutions to members who were involved in such disputes. These loans are collateralized by letters of credit from those state affiliates which are members of NEEAF and also by NEA's letter of credit in the amount of approximately $1,675,000 on which NEA pays a commitment fee. In the event of default on a loan, the bylaws of NEEAF provide that the bank shall first draw upon the letter of credit of the state affiliate from which the funds were transmitted and, thereafter, proportionately from all other letters of credit, including NEA's.

As of August 31, 1990, NEA is contingently liable for $1,567,343 of the $3,134,685 in loans guaranteed by NEEAF in the event of default. Subsequent to August 31, 1990 NEEAF guaranteed additional loans of $878,300.

8. NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION

The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) was created in 1969 by the National Education Association as a tax-exempt public foundation to improve the quality of education for citizens of the United States.

The Foundation develops strategies that address the most challenging problems confronting American education. NFIE has designed its direction to develop programs in three focus areas: improvement of students' educational success, improvement of teachers' professional capability and improvement of the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction.

During the year ended August 31, 1990, payments totaling $2,300,000 were made to NFIE. Of this amount, approximately $1,800,000 was allocated for an endowment that will help fund other programs to meet critical needs of students and teachers in years to come. The remaining funds were provided to cover administrative supporting services of the NFIE.

9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

NEA has entered into a construction contract and an architectural, design and engineering contract related to the construction of its office building. Construction of the facilities commenced in July 1988. Estimated outstanding commitments at August 31, 1990 relative to these contracts amount to approximately $24,535,000.

In April 1989, the Executive Committee approved that NEA guarantee a five year loan from American Security Bank to the Indiana State Teachers Association (ISTA). As of August 31, 1990, the amount outstanding on this loan was $1,725,005.

NEA leases office space at a number of locations under noncancelable operating leases. Future minimum lease payments under these leases as of August 31, 1990, are as follows:

1991	$1,903,634
1992	214,909
1993	40,200
	$2,158,743

Rental expense for all operating leases was approximately $1,035,000 in 1990 and $945,000 in 1989.

NEA has been named as a party in several legal matters, the outcome of which cannot presently be determined. Management believes that the net results of these claims will not have a material impact on NEA.

10. Income taxes

Under provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code and the applicable income tax regulations of the District of Columbia, NEA is exempt from taxes on income, other than taxes on unrelated business income. Since NEA has incurred a cumulative loss from these unrelated business activities, no provision for income taxes has been recorded in the accompanying financial statements.

11. Construction financing

On October 20, 1988, NEA entered into a construction loan agreement amounting to $36,000,000 of which $16,900,000 is outstanding at August 31, 1990 to be used to partially finance the construction of the NEA headquarters office building. The loan agreement provides for monthly interest only payments on the unpaid principal balance, at variable rates, during the construction period which is anticipated to be 30 months from the date of the loan agreement. At August 31, 1990, the interest rate is 10.25% per annum.

The entire unpaid principal balance together with all unpaid interest thereon shall be due in full at the end of the 30 months. NEA, subject to certain conditions, may elect to exercise the option to extend the original maturity date for an additional 30-month period thereafter. The loan is collateralized by NEA's headquarters office building, personal property, assignment of future leases and construction contracts. On August 25, 1989, NEA entered into a loan commitment agreement for a permanent mortgage loan with an 18 year maturity which will refinance the present construction loan.

During the year ended August 31, 1990, approximately $1,441,389 of interest charges has been incurred and has been capitalized as part of deferred building construction costs.

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You and your students could win a trip to UNEP* Earth Expo '91 at the United Nations April 25-26.

You could be taking your kids on the trip of their lifetime! Children from all corners of the world will assemble at the United Nations in New York City to be recognized for their achievements in protecting the environment. Submit your classroom environmental project and you could win the honor of attending too. Ninety groups will be selected. Three students and one adult representing each group. Other prizes will be awarded, too.

All entries are welcome. You don't have to be a Kids for Saving Earth Club member to apply. Your project can be on land, air and water conservation; endangered species or one of your own ideas. Be creative and have fun!

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* UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME, AN AGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

N

Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn.

S. Kenneth Schonberg, M.D., is director of the Division of Adolescent Medicine at New York's Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx and professor of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He chairs the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee on Adolescence and is a member of the Academy's task forces on AIDS and substance abuse.

Q. How serious a problem is teen alcohol abuse?

A. Alcohol use is among the major health problems of teenagers in the United States today.

More than 90 percent of high school seniors have had some experience with alcohol. About two-thirds of them drink at least once a month—and half of those young people will drink enough to become intoxicated. Nearly five percent of high school seniors drink every day.

The rate of alcohol use among teenagers doesn't seem to be increasing, but the age when young people begin to drink appears to be decreasing. Often, youngsters start drinking in elementary or middle school.

Q. What makes teenagers start drinking alcohol?

A. Teenagers begin to drink for a variety of reasons: curiosity about alcohol, for example, and imitating peers or older adolescents and adults. But they also often learn to enjoy the experience and find that drinking makes it easier for them to feel comfortable in social situations.

Q. What are the stages leading up to alcohol abuse?

A. It's difficult to separate alcohol use from alcohol abuse when we're talking about teenagers, especially young teenagers. With kids, it's difficult to talk about safe alcohol use.

Certain young people develop serious problems with alcohol, drinking frequently—even daily. All of them begin as social drinkers and, for reasons we don't clearly understand, become dependent on this drug.

Some of this dependency may be due to genetic factors that make certain individuals more prone to alcohol addiction than others.

Family and school difficulties are other factors indicating that a youngster may become addicted to alcohol. They can start a vicious cycle: once a teenager starts drinking too much or taking drugs to forget the problems, the drug or alcohol abuse makes the problems worse.

Q. Is alcohol abuse more serious than drug abuse?

A. Any drug abuse by young people can have serious consequences. Rarely, for example, does a young person using cocaine or heroin escape illness or injury.

Many young people are able to use alcohol without serious consequences. Many aren't. The large number of teenagers who drink suffer many health problems as a result.

Q. Does drinking lead a teenager to use other drugs?

A. Adolescents who abuse what we call hard drugs typically began by abusing alcohol or marijuana. It's impossible to say whether, if alcohol had never existed, kids would use hard drugs. But alcohol is, for some people, a stepping-stone to more dangerous drugs.

Q. Does alcohol abuse cause many deaths among teenagers?

A. The three leading causes of death among teens are accidents, homicide, and suicide. Nearly half of all teens who die in accidents are intoxicated at the time of their death, or are in a car driven by someone who's intoxicated.

By that measure alone, alcohol intoxication is the leading cause of death among American teens.

In addition, nearly one-third of all teenage murder victims are intoxicated at the time they're killed. And 20 percent of adolescents who die from suicide are intoxicated with alcohol at the time they make their fatal attempt.

Overall, alcohol intoxication is a leading cause of death among young people.

Q. What initial signs might a parent or teacher notice in a teen who drinks?

A. It's difficult to outline a series of signs or symptoms that would specifically indicate that a teenager has an alcohol problem. But it's not difficult to list the signs that flag a teen in trouble.

Such warning signs include school failure, poor school attendance, truancy, delinquency, frequent auto accidents, fights with family, and episodes of bizarre behavior. Often, but not always, alcohol is part of the picture.

It's less important for the parents to determine the exact cause of the difficulty than to appreciate that things aren't going well and the young person needs help.

Q. When should parents be concerned about their teenagers' drinking?

A. Always. Most adolescent deaths and injuries involve normal, healthy teens getting drunk at social events on Friday and Saturday nights.

From this perspective, every parent should be concerned about teenage drinking and the safety hazards of intoxication.

Q. Can alcohol abuse be prevented?

A. Given our culture, it seems quite clear that no matter what we do, we won't be able to eliminate alcohol use by teens or adults.

There's reason to hope we can decrease the number of young people who drink, help youngsters postpone drinking until they're older and more mature, and sponsor initiatives that would tend to make drinking and intoxication less hazardous.

Q. How can schools and educators help?

A. School employees can do a lot of things to address the consequences of teenage drinking. First, as part of their health education, young people should be made to fully understand what those consequences are.

Next, schools can help educate parents not only about the hazards of alcohol but also about possible parental or community actions that can decrease risks for young people.

Finally, the school as a community agency can help sponsor programs—designated driver initiatives, safe-ride programs, and alcohol-free events—that can cut down on risks.

Here's Help

Al-Anon Family Groups, P.O. Box 862, Midtown Station, New York, NY 10018-0862; 212/302-7240.

National Association for Children of Alcoholics, 31582 South Coast Highway, Suite B, South Laguna, CA 92629; 714/499-3889.

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 12 West 21st St., New York, NY 10010; 212/206-6770.

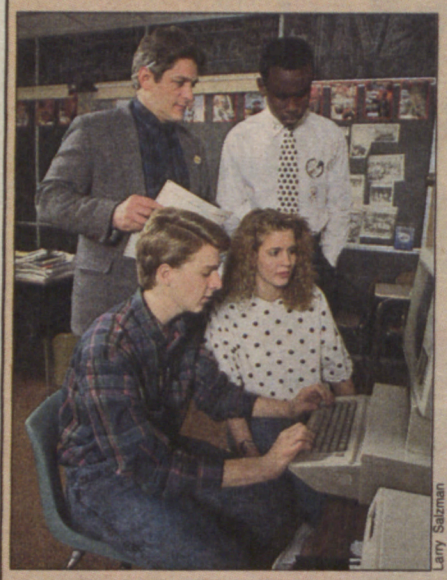
TECH TALK

Shaping the Future

Using a computer and the same data state planners use, Minnesota students are tackling tough state problems.

The northwest region of Minnesota has a health care problem. With a growing population of senior citizens and only one hospital to service the largely rural area, the situation could become critical in only a few years.

The solution: create a series of satellite clinics technologically linked to the main hospital and able to provide immediate care to county residents.


Larry Salzman

A meeting of the minds—Anoka students with their teacher William Mittlefehldt (standing at left).

The funding: state taxes on cigarettes and alcohol—taxes that might cut down consumption and further improve the health of Minnesota citizens.

The economic benefit: young families will no longer move out of the area in search of work and better health care, aging farmers can live and work longer, and the region will prosper.

Sound like the detailed analysis of a seasoned public official? Well, it isn't. It's the work of two seniors in William Mittlefehldt's honors social studies class at Anoka High School.

"These students looked at the same demographic and economic data as our state legislators," says Mittlefehldt. "They identified a cluster of counties that had a high number of elderly people and determined the health care problem it presents."

The assignment is part of an innovative project that gives students a chance to tackle real-life economic problems in their state. Mittlefehldt's students look at economic and demographic data, interview state and regional experts, and present possible solutions to legislators.

"I wanted to create a course that challenges the way students look at public policy," says Mittlefehldt, who created the program last year. "It replaces 'let the public officials decide policy' with 'take your part in deciding.' Technology plays a key role."

Mittlefehldt's students have tackled a host of problems identified by the State Planning Agency—from transportation to the farm economy.

"The teacher doesn't have all the answers," adds Mittlefehldt. "This makes it exciting to teach because we're all discovering new data and new solutions."

Connie Jedneak agrees. Jedneak is one of the students who uncovered the health care problem in Minnesota. "When we looked at the data and saw the scarcity of doctors, we realized something needed to be done," says Jedneak, now a pre-med student at Kalamazoo College in Michigan.

And the legislators? Anoka's state Representative, Alice Johnson, says they take the students' suggestions seriously. "A lot of time and effort went into these recommendations, and we'll treat them as seriously as we do any others."

—Anita Merina

William Mittlefehldt's innovative program is just one of those featured in* Learning Tomorrow, *a booklet of technology-based school programs available this spring from the NEA National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. For copies, write to: NFIE, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

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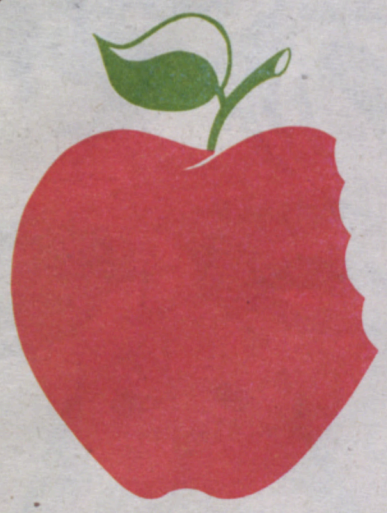

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NEA Picks A Dozen Urban Projects

NEA awarded grants to 12 urban local affiliates as part of the Association's continuing effort to improve education in the nation's inner cities. Each affiliate will use its $3,000 award to carry out an innovative project it proposed.

NEA President Keith Geiger announced the awards at the National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) meeting in Mesa, Arizona, in November.

"This year's winners are reflective of the wide-ranging efforts to achieve reform—in the classroom and in the teaching profession," Geiger said. "The programs range from those that focus on the needs of at-risk students to those in which teachers are assuming a greater role in decision-making in their schools," he added.

The award winners are:

► The Harford County Education Association in Maryland for a two-day Teaching/Learning Retreat.

The retreat is designed to provide information for new teachers, a fresh perspective for current teachers, and the chance for all participants to build mentoring relationships and professional bonds with their colleagues.

► The Southwestern Education Association in Ohio for its effort to prepare itself for site-based decision making by training a group of Association members in curriculum development and peer mentoring.

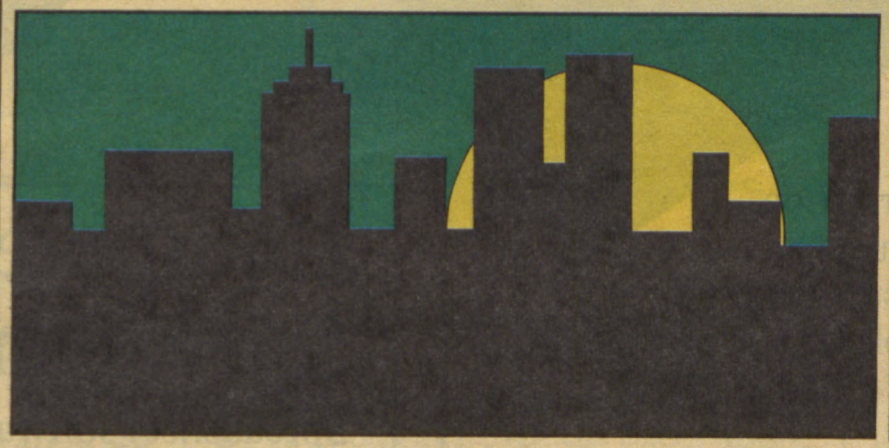
► The Education Association of Norfolk in Virginia for its "Check Out Teaching" initiatives, which encourage minorities, males, and others to pursue teaching as a career.

► The Springfield Education Association in Illinois for its Partnerships for Power program, established in conjunction with the Decatur Education Association. Building on the two-year success of this joint program, SEA and DEA are providing professional development opportunities for new teachers.

► The Ann Arbor Education Association in Michigan to review the ways an interdisciplinary curriculum affects the roles of teachers, building administrators, central administrators, parents, students, and the community.

► The Battle Creek Education Association in Michigan to provide local minority students the opportunity to become teachers in Battle Creek schools. (See page 7 for more information.)

► The Mesa Education Association in Arizona to bring together parents, students, teachers, school officials, and the business community to implement recommendations for accountability and curriculum change.



► The Sunnyside Education Association in Arizona for participating in the teacher mentoring phase of a SEA/AEA career ladder program.

► The Denver Teachers Association for its dropout prevention program, "Bridges to Success." The program, which was built through teamwork between educators and parents, is working to establish a long-term, districtwide commitment.

► The District 12 Educators' Association in Colorado for its B.E.S.T. proposal. In this Adopt-a-School program, businesses will work with educators at Pecos Jr. High to teach students skills that can make it easier for them to find employment.

► The El Paso Teachers Association in Texas for efforts to help teachers make the curriculum more relevant to "youth at risk"—and make gang involvement less relevant.

► The San Antonio Teachers Association in Texas for Operation SHARE. This project is designed to reduce the dropout rate, motivate minority students to become teachers, and form a Future Teachers Association.

Reach Out Through SpaceArc

SpaceArc, the ultimate satellite time capsule, invites educators and their students to send messages worldwide to today's and future generations.

Developed by the Rochester Museum and Science Center in New York, SpaceArc will be launched into the earth's orbit sometime in 1992 and will continue circling the globe for millions of years.

On board will be the thoughts, hopes, and dreams of our civilization, in the form of messages from people worldwide. And there'll be more than written messages; musical compositions and drawings, for instance, will be included.

While SpaceArc orbits the earth, duplicate sets of the messages will be accessible through earth stations located throughout the world.

For a teacher's guide and more information, contact SpaceArc, Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave., Box 1480, Rochester NY 14603-1480 (716-271-4320).

How Healthy Is Your School?

To provide information on the major environmental hazards in today's school buildings, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has prepared *Environmental Hazards in Your School: A Resource Handbook.*

The specific environmental hazards discussed are: asbestos, indoor air quality, radon, lead in drinking water, and other contaminants in school-operated water systems.

For each subject, a chapter of the booklet explains the nature of the hazard and what schools can do to address it. A comprehensive list of contacts is provided.

The chapter on asbestos, for instance, includes a discussion on what asbestos is and why it's a problem, how to reduce risks in your school, current requirements—what must be done, as well as federal help available to do it—and where to get more information.

The 69-page booklet also provides information on some other environmental concerns, such as underground storage tanks, recycling efforts, pesticides, and polychlorinated biphenyls.

NEA members can get up to five copies of the handbook free by calling the Toxic Substances Control Act Hotline: 202-554-1404.

Celebrate World Children's Day

World Children's Day is a time for celebration and a time for commitment to making a better world—beginning in one's own community. The theme for the 1991 celebration of World Children's Day reflects that two-pronged focus: "Lend a Hand, Let's Build a Bright, Clean Land."

How can your students participate? It's as simple as identifying an environmental problem, creating awareness of the problem, and taking action to solve it.

Participating students will organize a community gathering on the fourth Sunday in April (April 28, 1991) to display their projects.

You can get guidelines for participating and an entry form by contacting—by February 15—the World Children's Day Foundation, 4401 A Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 287, Washington, DC 20008, 202-966-7726.

The deadline for submitting entry forms is February 15.

NEA Wants YOU!

The NEA UniServ Intern Program is looking for highly motivated and committed NEA members interested in employment as UniServ staff. Applicants must be female or members of an ethnic minority and be able to relocate if necessary.

The 15 individuals selected will participate at NEA's expense in an intensive five-week training program in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area beginning July 14, 1991. After successfully completing the training, interns will receive up to three months of full-time, field-based training work with experienced UniServ staffers.

Send your letter of interest to: Deloris Edwards, Intern Program Manager, NEA, 1101 15th St., N.W., 7th Floor, Washington, DC 20005.

Your letter must be received by NEA no later than March 15, 1991.

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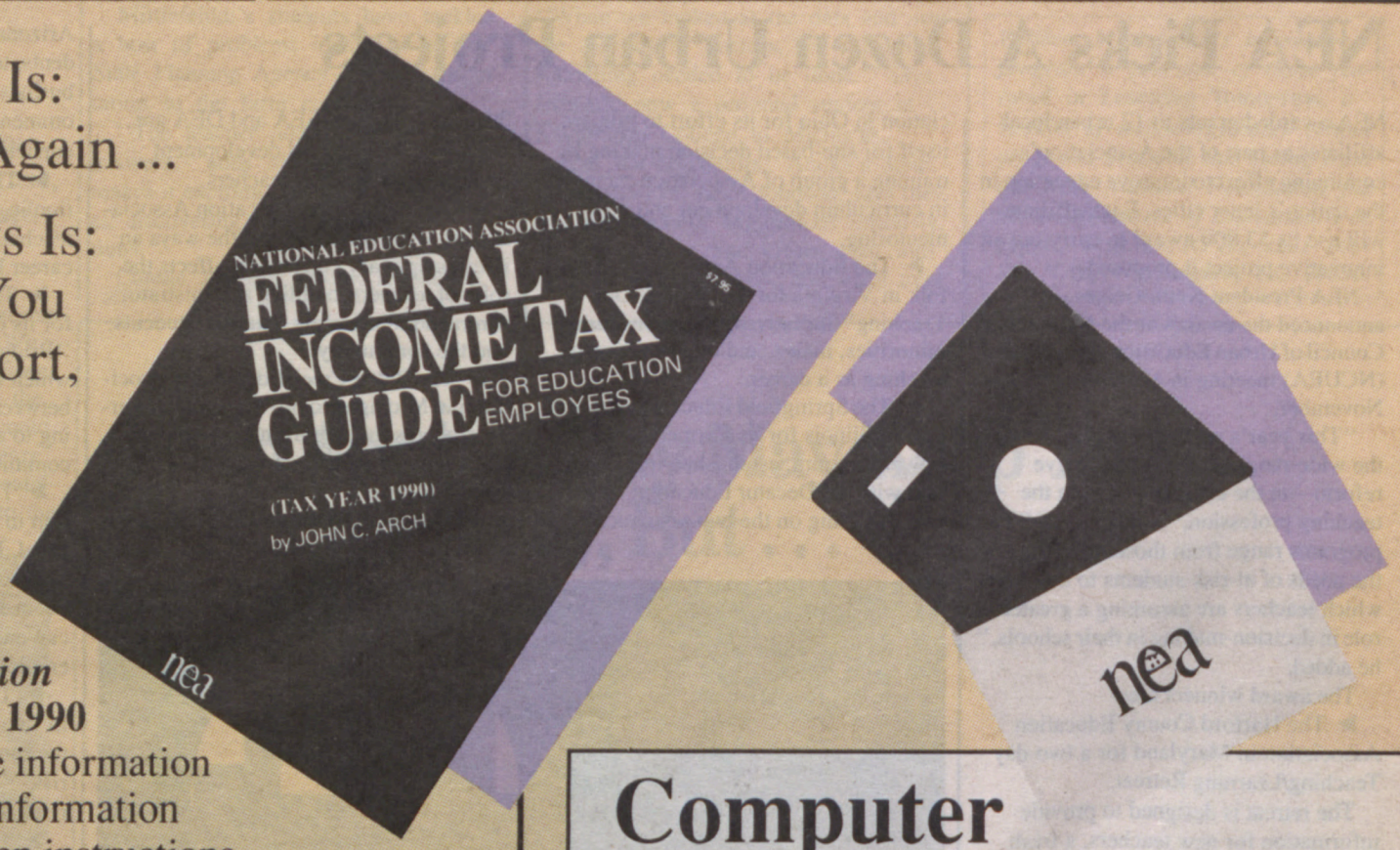

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BOOK BEAT

Voices from the Classroom

John Godar took a year to travel the country and ask teachers what's on their minds.

A former high school English teacher and Association member from Cincinnati, Godar interviewed 282 teachers in 30 public school districts in 10 states. And then he pulled all the interviews together into a new book, *Teachers Talk*.

"What I found," Godar writes in the introduction to his book, "were great teachers, often in horrendous working conditions dealing with impossible children, broken by a weak society. And I felt it was time they had their say in the debate over what's wrong with public education."

Here's a sampling of what teachers had to say on everything from accomplishments to failures to reasons for staying.

On money for education:

"No matter what conservative politicians say, money is one of the major problems of public education. They constantly say, 'you can't throw money at the problem that is education and expect it to get better.' And of course they're right ... but if they had good aim, there are a lot of targets that could be hit with that money.

"If I worked two extra hours every school day and every weekend day, I wasn't going to be given time and a half; there was no bonus coming at Christmas ... My brother would get a $2,000 bonus, I would get a stapler...."

On how to teach for 40 years:

"With a great deal of tears, laughter, a few children along the way who have made it worthwhile, a very patient, forbearing husband, wonderful friends, and after 25 years saying, 'I've gone this far, I might as well go the rest of the way.'"

On changing careers:

"I can't see myself being a teacher for the rest of my life; I've already looked into other careers. I think I'd really like to go into child psychology. I really love working with children. It really breaks me up inside when I think of leaving it, because I love all my children. As difficult as they are, I'm devoted to them; I love them; I'd stand up for them no matter what. But there are just too many other factors."

On schools:

"I enjoy teaching; I've never considered getting out. And since I have a degree in chemistry, I had some choice. I work here in an inner city high school. The advantages are that you meet very interesting students who come from a variety of backgrounds and make it very stimulating.

"The major disadvantage of working at this school in particular is the hall environment and the outside-of-classroom environment. It bothers me to have students running around the halls or outside of the school and being disruptive.

On respect for teachers:

"We have become the whipping boy for what's wrong with this country—not just what's wrong with education, but 'why can't Johnny read,' and 'why do we have so many illiterates,' and 'why aren't businesses attracted and kept,' and 'why can't we get in new industry.'"

On the rewards:

"I had a really, really slow class at the inner city high school. And I just threw out the curriculum; I just said the hell with it.... I just tailored it to try and fit them, and I'd bring in things I thought they were interested in. And we had some really great sessions together and we all got to know one another and when the school year was over, on the very last day (begins to cry)—I'll never get through this. They lined up clear around the room and every person shook my hand on the way out. To me, I mean, that says it. I mean, that's it—right there."

Excerpted with permission from ***Teachers Talk,*** *by John Godar. 297 pp. $19.95 from Glenbridge Publishing, Ltd., Macomb, IL 61455.*

The NEA Professional Library Book Club's current selection is *The Skillful Teacher,* by Stephen D. Brookfield. For membership information, write NEA PLBC, P.O. Box 941, Northvale, NJ 07647.

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RESEARCH CLUES

Labels and Learning

Researchers are raising provocative questions about methods of identifying, diagnosing, and providing reading instruction for the growing numbers of kids identified as "learning disabled."

A recent edition of the Education Research Service publication *Research Digest* examines new methods of early intervention designed to improve students' reading abilities without attaching labels that may actually get in the way of learning.

Students classified as "learning disabled"(under the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act) or "economically disadvantaged" (under Chapter 1 of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act) may be labeled so they can get special help in reading.

But some researchers suggest this approach may backfire. "There is little evidence in the research to show that these federally funded Chapter 1 or EHA reading programs substantially improve the reading skills of students who participate in them," conclude Richard L. Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen, two of the authors cited.

They say a key flaw in current approaches to reading instruction is the belief that instructors ought to be doing something other than what they do with "regular" students.

Most remedial programs use the small group or the pull-out approach. According to researchers, this supplementary instruction fails to supplement at all.

They say pull-out programs provide a fragmented instructional experience. What's more, when children leave their regular classroom, they miss out on reading and language arts activities from the core curriculum.

The researchers contend that poor readers need more and better instruction, rather than a different kind of instruction.

Research To Use In the Real World

How does information about school reform work its way into the hands of school reformers? Often, it doesn't. That's why NEA recently published *Teachers and Research in Action*, a 104-page book about how teachers can use the existing knowledge base to reform schools.

And it's not just a one-way street. Teachers can be involved in adding to the knowledge base as well. As the introduction to the book notes, "If the knowledge base is to be used, expanded, and enriched, there must be dynamic interaction between teachers and researchers. The chasm now existing between them must disappear."

Teachers and Research in Action is the first of a series on restructuring schools. It may be ordered for $10.95 from the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509; West Haven, CT 06516, 1-800-229-4200. Request stock number 3004-4-00-F.

Diverse Classes: A Teacher's Perspective

A new report, *Embracing Diversity*, documents teachers' efforts to find effective ways to teach in a multiethnic environment.

Conclusions from 36 California teachers—many of them NEA members—are included in the report. The teachers were selected for their particularly effective teaching techniques in ethnically diverse classrooms.

Approximately 16 percent of the California's public school students were born in another nation, and close to 100 different languages are spoken in the state's classrooms.

The challenges the teachers describe are more or less familiar to all American teachers. They teach English to students who aren't native speakers. They also deal daily with the increasing hostilities and tensions between ethnic and racial groups in demographically changing schools.

Among the extensive teacher profiles that comprise the 115-page book are vivid examples of how teachers set the tone for student behavior in their classrooms.

Says a middle school social studies teacher, "An overall rule in my class is that you don't make killer statements. You don't say anything about yourself or anyone else that is going to nail their self-esteem.

"It's not okay to make a gay-bashing statement or a racial slur, or to call yourself by a put-down term. It's just not okay."

The report concludes that all California teachers should be proficient in four major areas:

- ► language development
- ► knowledge of cultures and backgrounds of the students
- ► the building and teaching of a student-centered curriculum that integrates the diverse cultures of the students
- ► the establishment of a classroom and school climate that actively combats prejudice and builds respect among racial, ethnic and national groups.

The report includes a list of resources useful to teachers in multiethnic classrooms and a call to policy makers to address this critical topic.

Embracing Diversity is the third study in a five-part series of publications by California Tomorrow. Copies of the publication are available for $16 from California Tomorrow, Fort Mason Center, Building B, San Francisco, CA. 94123. 1-415-441-7631.

Survivors in the Alcoholic Home

The 6.6 million children under the age of 18 who live in households with at least one alcoholic parent are at risk. The social and psychological dysfunctions of the alcoholic home foster cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems.

At the same time, the children may inherit a genetic proclivity to become alcoholic themselves.

But many children of alcoholics seem immune to these risks. Their resistance has captured the attention of researchers at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

A longitudinal study of such children born on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, showed that some 59 percent functioned well; only 41 percent developed serious problems.

The children who were able to function well shared several characteristics, including appropriate communication skills, average intelligence, a caring attitude, a desire to achieve, the ability to receive positive attention from other people, and a belief in self-help.

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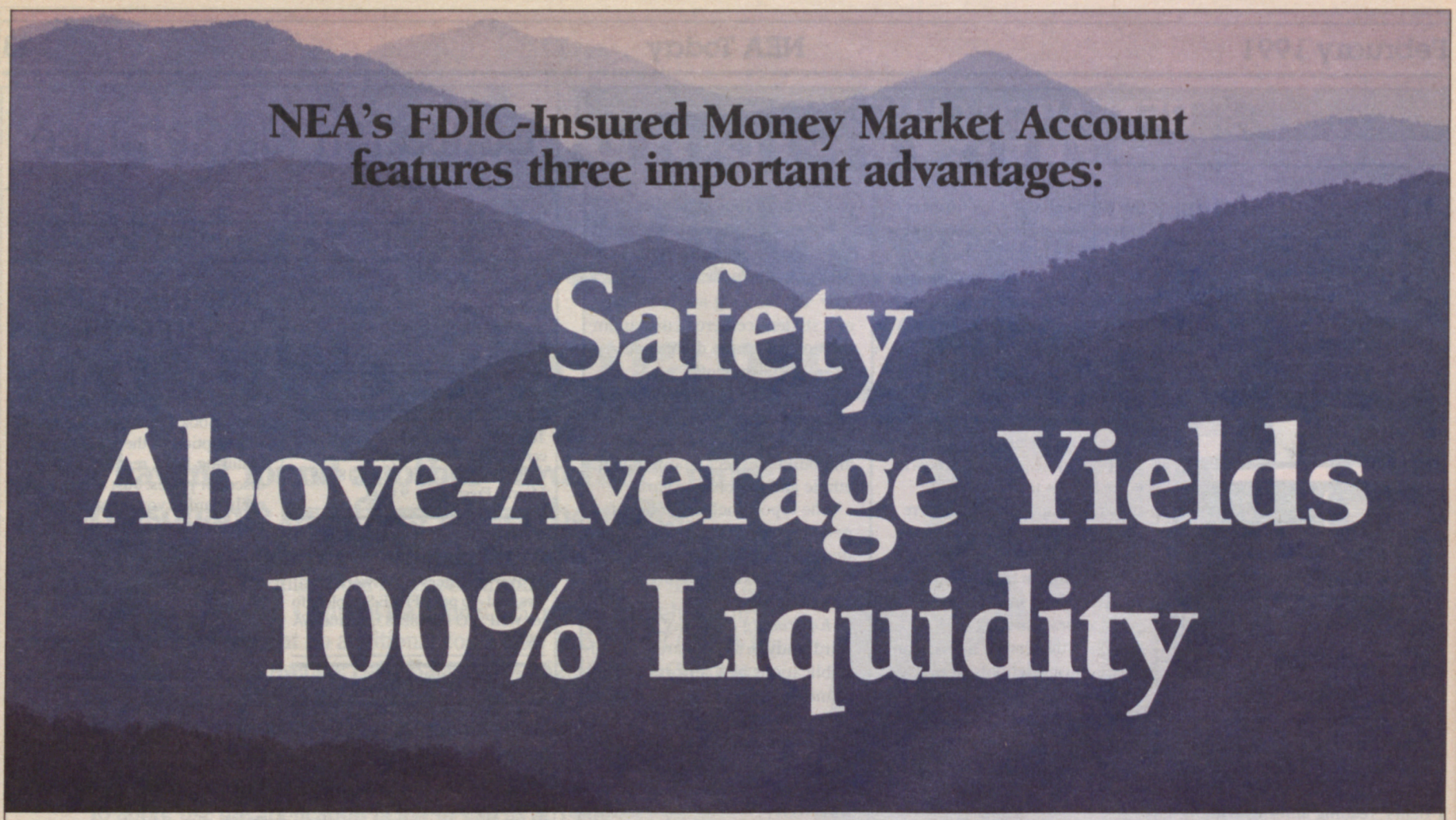

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Looking Back

The Newspaper's the Ticket

Tennessee Teacher

More and more, teachers are using newspapers as a classroom tool ("Extra! Extra! Teachers Discover New Resource: Newspapers," Nov. 1989). But, says the Tennessee Press Association, nobody does it better than NEA member Cathy Glenn.

Glenn's sixth grade science unit on the earth's surface won first place in TPA's Newspapers in Education competition. The contest, "Passport to the World," challenged teachers to create a five-day geography unit with newspapers as the instructional tool.

Glenn divided her students into groups that "visited" locations like Mt. St. Helen's, California earthquake sites, and mid-Atlantic Ocean ridges.

Wearing a tour-guide outfit complete with safari hat, sunglasses, camera, and suitcase, Glenn helped the kids make passports, using letters from the newspaper to form words and newspaper photos for their identification pictures.

They then used newspapers as sources to answer questions, create maps, construct charts and graphs, and write articles. The kids even participated in a newspaper scavenger hunt where they had to find articles related to the unit, based on clues provided by Glenn.

As final project, the students produced a newspaper.

Glenn's prize for winning the competition was a trip to Europe—with a real passport.

Children's TV: A Step In the Right Direction

It's not everything they wanted, but advocates for better children's TV, including NEA, say the new Children's Television Act of 1990 ("Champion of Children's TV," Oct.) is a good piece of legislation.

The bill:

- limits advertising on children's programs to 10½ minutes an hour on weekends and 12 minutes an hour on weekdays.
- requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), as part of its license renewal review, to consider whether a station has complied with the advertising limitation and whether its overall programming "has served the educational and informational needs of children."
- authorizes the FCC to consider, as part of its license renewal review, any special nonbroadcast efforts by the station that "will enhance the educational and informational value" of children's programs.
- establishes the National Endowment for Children's Educational Television under the direction of the Secretary of Commerce.
- authorizes the Endowment to stimulate the creation and production of children's educational programs for children. It can do this through either contract with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or direct grants to creators and producers.
- mandates that programs produced with Endowment funds be shown only on public TV during the first two years after production. After that, they'll be available to commercial and cable broadcasters.
- establishes a national Advisory Council on Children's Television. The 10 members, experts in education, psychology, child development, or television programming, will be appointed by the Secretary of Commerce.

Potentially, says NEA Government Relations staffer Joel Packer, the FCC can refuse to renew a station's license if it doesn't comply with the new rules. But just how much punch the Children's Television Act of 1990 carries will depend on the FCC's interpretation.

Legislation similar to the Children's Television Act of 1990 had been passed by Congress in 1988 but vetoed by President Reagan. President Bush let the 1990 bill become law without his signature.

Drop Out and Lose Your License

The West Virginia Supreme Court, in a 3-2 decision, has upheld the nation's first state law denying 16- and 17-year-old high school dropouts the right to drive ("Should Dropouts Be Denied Driver's Licenses?," Oct. 1989). The two-year-old law had been appealed by a dropout who argued he was entitled to a hardship exception because he couldn't find a job if he didn't have a license to drive.

Wrote Chief Justice Richard Neely, "A child who has an opportunity to go to school and deliberately chooses not to avail himself or herself of such opportunity demonstrates a general lack of responsibility." Neely's opinion noted that a student's license wouldn't be revoked if the student leaves school with the consent of administrators.

The majority opinion said that before a student quits, school officials have to provide a hearing to notify the student of the consequences.

Hyperactivity Study Yields New Findings

For the first time, researchers have identified a brain abnormality associated with hyperactivity ("The Ritalin Controversy," Sept. 1989).

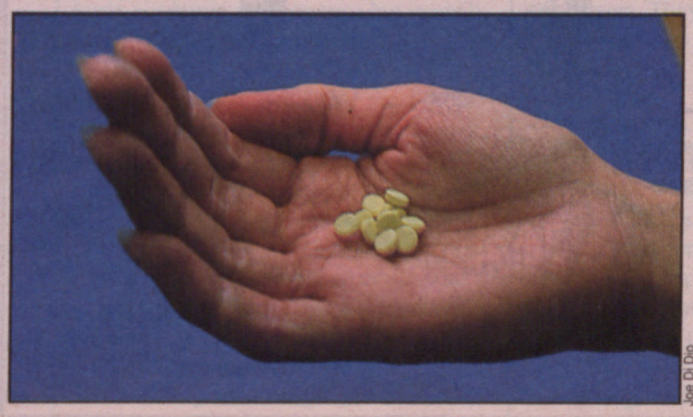
Using a highly sensitive imaging technique to study brain cell activity, psychiatrists at the National Institute of Mental Health found decreased activity in brain portions involved in attention control and motor functions.

About 5 percent of our nation's children are diagnosed as hyperactive. Between 70 and 80 percent of them—800,000—take the drug Ritalin, the most common form of treatment.

In their study, NIMH psychiatrists worked with 25 mildly hyperactive adults and 50 normal adults. They injected sugar molecules labeled with a radioactive isotope into each person's bloodstream and used a scanning technique to monitor how brain cells use the sugar.

They found that the brains of the hyperactive adults used an average of 8.1 percent less sugar than those of the normal adults, indicating that the brain cells of the hyperactive persons were 8.1 percent less active. The largest reductions were in the regions of the brain that relate to attention and motor activity control.

NIMH cautions that its study involved adults with mild hyperactivity who have never taken Ritalin and who have a hyperactive child. The psychiatrists are currently studying teens with no family history of hyperactivity to see if the study results can be extended to all types of patients.


Joe Di Dio

From Bethel to Bethel—And Then Beyond

Peter Kemp

Bethel, Connecticut, students (left to right) Devon McGuinness, Kelly Zimmerman, and Kim Burnside talk with students in Bethel, Alaska.

It seems appropriate: The BEARS have contacted Alaska.

BEARS is an acronym for the Bethel Educational Amateur Radio Society, a group of technical education students at Bethel Middle School in Connecticut (People, Sept.). Their Alaska contact was Kilbuck Elementary School, located in a town coincidentally called Bethel, some 250 miles east of Anchorage.

The BEARS spend much of their time in class and after school making radio contact with U.S. and Soviet satellites as well as other schools. In fact, they learned about Kilbuck from a school in Hawaii.

BEARS director and teacher Peter Kemp wrote to Kilbuck and arranged a radio conversation between kids at the two schools.

Kemp notes that the 45-minute connection was definitely atypical for the BEARS: no locations and signal reports this time—just questions about hangouts, hair styles, and school cancellations.

In the Next Issue ...

What can a preschool program do to help youngsters succeed as students? The March issue of *NEA Today* will take a look at a top-quality, state-funded preschool program in Oakland, California.

Letters

On El Salvador

I would like to congratulate *NEA Today* on its important and timely piece on El Salvador, "Anger and Fear" (International, December). As U.S. citizens, we are directly responsible for what is happening in El Salvador since we have funded ($4 billion) a government that has acted with impunity for over 10 years.

My personal interest in El Salvador began in 1977 as a Peace Corps volunteer at the Salvadoran National University. I can personally attest to much of the testimony given by the teachers quoted in your article, since both my brother and my sister-in-law were killed by death squads.

My wife, who is also a teacher in her native country of El Salvador, always feared identifying her profession, because teachers—along with priests, students, union members—are considered subversives.

The Folger's coffee boycott is a start, but further coverage of the Salvadoran struggle is needed to fully understand that the war will continue until the Salvadoran people can win equal access to medical care, education, and land.

Richard Merlino
Athens, Ohio

Support for a boycott of Folger's coffee, advocated in the December issue, is far from unanimous.

The Catholic bishops of El Salvador, and also the largest democratic organization of laborers and farmworkers, the National Union of Workers and Peasants, say the boycott will hurt the very people it is supposed to help.

Advice from such sources should be followed. Folger's coffee should not be boycotted, at least not at this time.

Louis Leopold
Easthampton, Massachusetts

Boosting Esteem

I'm very concerned about the attitude on self-esteem expressed by Roger Green (Debate, December). Does this man live with his head buried in the sand? He asks, "Are students of today so different from the students of yesterday that they require such a costly special program?"

Today's children live in a world very different from the one in which Mr. Green first taught 28 years ago. One look at the statistics concerning divorce, drugs, single-parent families, school dropouts, working moms, technology, crime and violence, and adolescent suicide tells me that our children must be suffering.

Mr. Green states that if children don't perform up to standard, the teacher should tell them of their failure. Promoting self-esteem in the classroom doesn't mean that teachers can't place high expectations on their students, nor does it mean that the students should be praised if these expectations aren't met.

It means working with students so they may achieve to the best of their ability. This can be done in a manner that doesn't strip students of their dignity. It doesn't require costly special programs, but a dedicated staff that works together to integrate self-esteem directly into the curriculum.

I'm fortunate to be in a school system where the entire staff and administration realize the importance of promoting self-esteem as part of education, not because we're trying to "gain the admiration of an innovation-starved public," but because we believe Webster's definition of self-esteem—"satisfaction in oneself"—is important for our students.

Jean Kruse
Traer, Iowa

Drag Racing

I read with interest the article "Burning Rubber in Cheyenne" (People, December).

I appreciate *NEA Today*'s giving special attention to Ed White and his 1969 Dodge Charger, but please know that many teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and students across the nation are associated with the sport of drag racing.

The acknowledged founder of modern drag racing is the National Hot Rod Association, the world's largest and only full-service sanctioning body in motorsports.

NHRA is also committed to developing and providing educators and coordinators with appropriate materials and programs that will connect classroom learning opportunities to drag racing, emphasize the importance of staying in school, encourage safety in driving, and support anti-substance abuse programs.

In October, a career opportunity fair was held in Pomona, California, in which more than 2,100 students and teachers from more than 90 high school programs were given an opportunity to see and hear professional and local drivers, crew members, and marketing and video production personnel share their expertise on career opportunities in the motorsport industry.

More than 500,000 men and women participate in NHRA events each year. Our thanks to *NEA Today* for recognizing Mr. White, the kind of participant who makes up the backbone of our sport.

Kendall Pyle
Director, Youth and Education Programs
National Hot Rod Association
Glendora, California

A Challenge to Quayle

NEA Today recently quoted Dan Quayle as stating he hoped teachers were not getting into teaching just as a job or a way to put food on the table (National News, November). I would like to point out the sad truth about going into the field of education.

I have 14 years' experience teaching elementary school, and I have a master's degree plus 20 credits. Teachers here are required to continually renew credentials to stay current, and I firmly believe in continuing my education.

Unfortunately, I can't even put food on the table for my family. From my salary of $24,500 per year, I actually receive about $1,500 a month after taxes. I have a preschool child and pay $300 a month for day care.

Medical insurance for my two children costs me $134 a month, a cost the school district does not cover. That leaves me with a little over $1,000 a month. I don't believe Mr. Quayle would care to live on $1,000 a month.

The maids and waitresses in this town make more than I do. I'm certainly not in the field of education for the money, and I feel it's a real slap in the face for our Vice President to make that type of statement.

I'd like to challenge Mr. Quayle to spend some time in a classroom and with a teacher before he makes further judgments on why we're teachers or what we need to do to improve the quality of education.

Peggy Thompson
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Backing Channel One

As a career-long member of NEA, I was extremely disappointed to see the brief news article saying "hats off" to students who walked out of school to protest Channel One programs because they considered them too immature (National News, November).

I'm concerned about the negative tone NEA has taken toward Channel One. The programs are not commercial-laden, as the article implied, but contain just two minutes' worth of commercials each day.

Many days the "commercials" are public service ads encouraging students to stay in school, avoid drugs, avoid drinking and driving, etc. In fact, one week all the commercial time was devoted to encouraging students to stay in school. With the national drop-out problem as bad as it is, any encouragement should be welcome.

Our school has used Channel One for almost six weeks now. I believe it has improved students' knowledge of current events, provided positive examples and role models—besides athletes and performers—for minority students, and given our students a common experience that was lacking before Channel One.

The equipment we now have has enabled us to promote school events, teams, and a reading encouragement program. We are just learning to use the equipment and technology; the future only looks bright because we have it.

The Classroom Channel which comes with Channel One contains many programs spread across the curriculum. They are commercial free, designed for high school students, and generally not copyrighted. There have been some excellent programs on this channel.

I teach seniors, and I have not heard them say the programs are too immature, although they occasionally think the commercials are repetitive and "stupid." They seem to like the program segments.

Before NEA members take their "hats off" to those students, maybe they should check with some people who have their hats on.

Jerry Brown
Indianapolis, Indiana

More on Guns

I would be a failure as a teacher if, in my classroom, I presented, embraced, and forced upon my students only one side of any controversial issue.

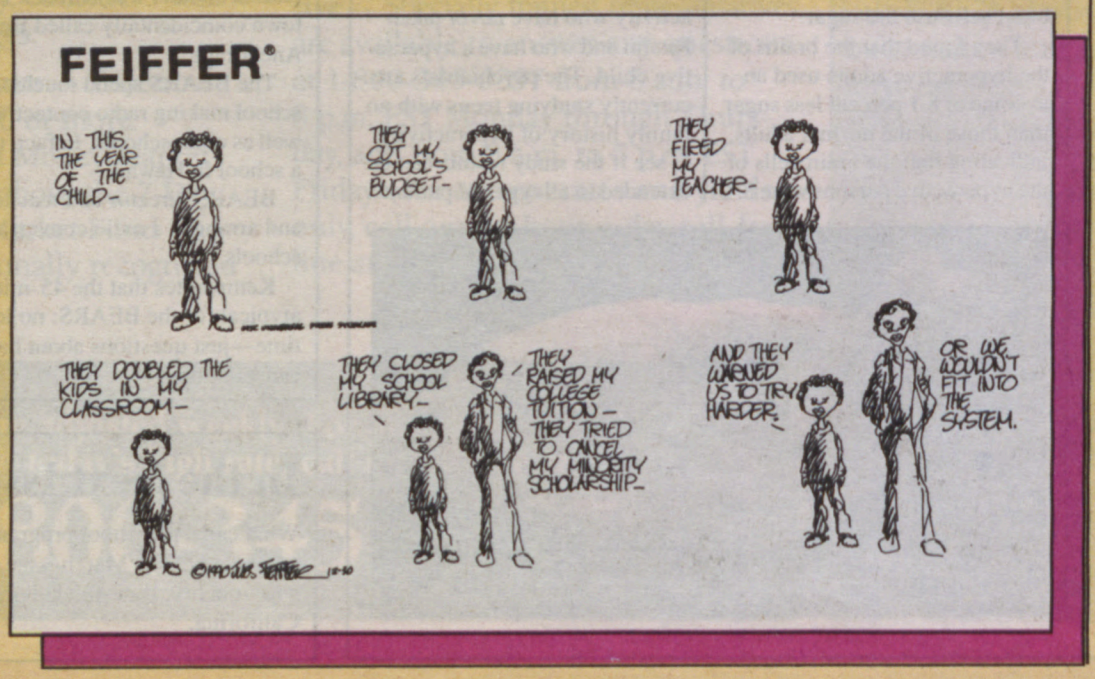
Unfortunately, your magazine did exactly what its readers, as educators, should not do, when it granted free and exclusive space to Sarah Brady, her kitchen-table statistics, her unsupported generalizations, her imprecisions and lies (Washington Watch, November).

If you are as democratic and impartial as you claim to be (and if you ever were good classroom teachers), please stop ignoring the large number of NEA members who do not care to see their rights under the Second Amendment shrink and disappear. Allow a rebuttal by Mrs. Brady's counterpart—the NRA.

I realize the NEA's policies and political commitments are voted upon by the members, and that—perhaps—a majority of NEA's membership decided to adopt an anti-civil liberties stance (as far, at least, as the Second Amendment is concerned).

However, let me humbly remind you that the purpose of the Bill of Rights is to safeguard the rights of a minority from a potentially oppressive majority. Therefore, if you deny a dissenting, pro-gun voice the right to have equal space in your magazine, you will show disregard not only for the Second Amendment, but also for the First.

Giovanni Tallino
Kodiak, Alaska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Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

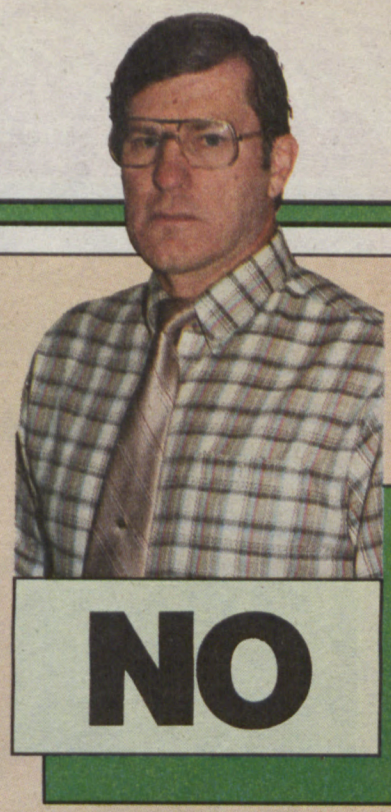
Mike Maple

YES

Does Fast Food Slow Learning?

Mattie Anderson, a sixth grade teacher at Winchester Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, is president of the Memphis Education Association. A 25-year teaching veteran, Anderson taught school in Liberia, West Africa, as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Bruce Baker, a veteran social studies and psychology teacher, teaches at Williams High School in Williams, Arizona, a town of 2,500, 60 miles south of the Grand Canyon. Baker has been teaching for 19 years and is a former president of the Williams Education Association.



Allan Duncan

NO

I'm not opposed to students working. I'm opposed to students working late on school nights.

I firmly believe that young adults can learn much in the world of work. They can learn the responsibilities of being on time, being at work each day assigned, and following directions.

But I'm concerned about the young people who work until midnight or later. I know some high school students who are working until 2:30 in the morning!

That's why the Tennessee Education Association proposed a bill prohibiting students from working after 10 p.m. on nights preceding a school day or before 6 a.m. on school days. And that's why state legislators voted for it. It's now law.

In the past several years a growing number of TEA members have complained about students who come to school with incomplete homework or no homework, or who fall asleep because they're physically exhausted from working too late the night before.

On the day I testified before Tennessee legislators, one of my colleagues spoke. She brought out a squirt gun given her by one of her students.

That student worked 50 to 55 hours a week and was always sleepy. He told her to use the squirt gun to wake him up when he fell asleep in class.

I've heard people argue that many students in poor, disadvantaged homes need to work to provide for the family.

When a teenager is providing the sole income for a family, that family has serious problems that need to be addressed by somebody outside the schools. And when a family needs a student's earnings to supplement its other income, I believe there should be limits to the amount of work the student is allowed to take on.

Suppose a student works eight hours Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, without working late Sunday, and works from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. three other days of the week.

That adds up to 39 hours a week. On top of school, it's a bit much, but it can be done—when families absolutely need the money and employers are willing.

Members of the business community responded to TEA's legislation by saying that if no student could work past 9 p.m., they wouldn't hire students at all.

To me, it's an education question. For the users of student labor—mostly fast-food chains and grocery stores—it's an economic one.

"In South Korea and West Germany, virtually no students hold jobs while they're in school," says Scott Thomson, former executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals. "American teens work more because of a demand for cheap labor and a culture that promotes acquisition of consumer goods."

If businesses can't get students to work for minimum wage or less—some students are working for a subminimum wage—and no benefits, with irregular hours, they may have to pay nonstudents more to do the jobs.

In a city like Memphis, with its high adult unemployment rate, I don't think that would be so bad.

Many students who work are the ones who can least afford to give school a half-hearted effort. I fear that these students will become vulnerable by putting their educations second. They're determining the direction of their whole lives in their middle teens.

An article in NASSP's *Report on Education Research* (October 1989) concluded "work outside school not only hurts academic performance but contributes to the high dropout rate."

This conclusion was based on a North Carolina study showing that most dropouts were employed many hours a week when they left school.

I want to see those most susceptible to dropping out get a chance to succeed in life. The only way they can succeed in this day and age is to get an education.

If we, as educators, want students to become educated, we must first show them that an education is more important than working late at night at a minimum wage job.

We have quite a few students from socioeconomically depressed families and a growing number of single parents here in Williams. We have only one fast food place, but most of the students work in service jobs—in restaurants, groceries, and shops.

We have students who work four hours a day—even six or seven hours a day. I've had several students who've had to work until 10:30 or 11 at night. That's usually because they need to help with family expenses. I don't believe they have much choice.

I do believe that working while in school teaches our students a number of valuable lessons.

Working helps teach kids responsibility and prepares them for the real world. I don't know about the rest of the country, but more and more children of single parents are in my classes.

By working, they're learning to balance their responsibilities—something they'll have to do whether they go to college or continue working and raise their own families.

Students who plan to go on to higher education have to juggle jobs and books because the expense is so great. If they can do that in high school—and maintain a decent grade-point average—a college recruiter or potential employer is going to look at their job as good experience.

Working helps many students become self-reliant. They learn the importance of budgeting *and* the value of money.

Working students also become better consumers. They're more careful in their choices because they're spending money they've earned.

Through the years I've seen a lot of students who expect everything to be given them. They don't appreciate what they have or hesitate to ask for more.

Their boyfriends or girlfriends—who usually work for their spending money—say these students quarrel with them when they won't buy an expensive watch or necklace or tickets for a concert.

Working students know how hard it is to earn money and how easy it is to spend it. They aren't as easily swayed anymore by what's attractive or popular.

We have a lot of 16-year-olds who are adults now. They're growing up because they have to, and we have to accept that, too.

They need more self-respect to grapple with the responsibilities of parenthood or the pressures of premature adulthood. Working increases their self-esteem and gains the respect of older people.

I also believe many of our students are beginning to learn the value of their education. They no longer ask, "Why do we have to learn this, or that?" They already know.

Don't get me wrong. I believe working students must be carefully monitored. Employers can be exploitive and education can suffer, but it doesn't have to be that way.

Here at Williams, we have a work experience program coordinator. This staff person works with local businesses to find jobs for students who need to work or want to work. The coordinator is also there to evaluate the student's work and step in when there's a problem.

Students' work experiences can be very positive if the schools supply a good, caring coordinator or counselor like the one at Williams.

Schools need to establish relationships with local businesses so they understand our priorities, too. If business cares about nothing but profits, the student suffers.

That's why schools and businesses need to work together to establish a curriculum that lets students learn on the job—and get credit for it, too.

That's a positive step for students and an economically wise step for the business—and the community.

Williams is a small town, but our students aren't very different from anyone else's. Some of them need to contribute to the support of their families. Others want to work for extra spending money. Still others do it to explore possible career options.

I can't make my students' choices for them. But what I can do is make sure they learn from them.

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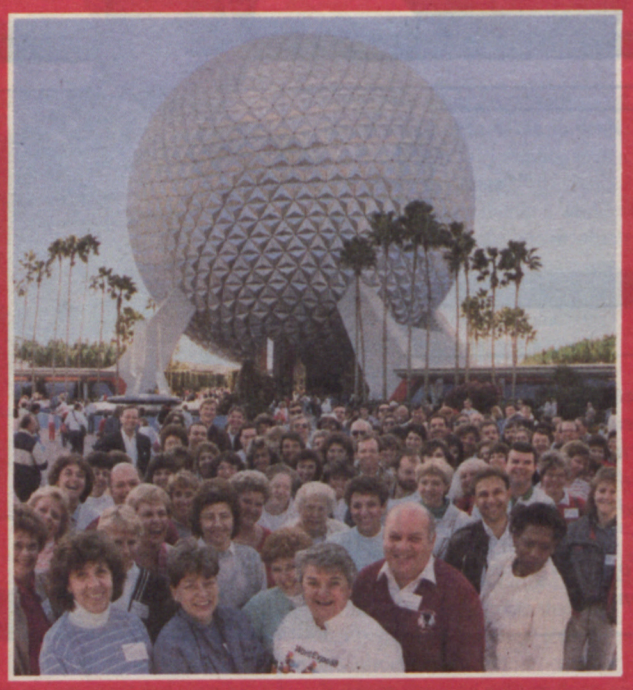

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A Preview Weekend

On-Site Workshop—KENNEDY SPACE CENTER'S SPACEPORT USA

Join the ranks of teachers and administrators who have enjoyed the benefits of advanced preparation…for THE ULTIMATE FIELD TRIP! Preview the EARTH SHUTTLE program at four remarkable learning centers, EPCOT Center WALT DISNEY WORLD® Resort, KENNEDY SPACE CENTER'S SPACEPORT USA,℠ SEA WORLD® and UNIVERSAL STUDIOS FLORIDA,® prior to your students' trip. The EARTH SHUTTLE On-Site Seminar was developed to assist participating teachers and administrators in utilizing experiential learning as a student motivator. The three-day session is based upon the successful EARTH SHUTTLE student program. Interactive morning workshops and afternoon on-site visits provide opportunities to study materials and field test activities. The weekend will show you how to integrate EARTH SHUTTLE topics, teaching strategies and 21st century information into your curriculum. Participants are eligible for 2 optional graduate credits from Boston University…details will be provided in your Information Pak.

What's Included:

Round-trip air, transfers, 2 nights' lodging, all admissions, 2 continental breakfasts, poolside reception, instruction, private briefings and curriculum materials.

How To Qualify:

Enroll 15 students by May 15, 1991. Every 15 $90.00 deposits represents 1 free trip for the weekend seminar. Note: In addition to the free seminar weekend, you will travel free when you accompany your students at a later date.

Earth Shuttle Overview:

EARTH SHUTTLE provides active instruction, hands-on exercises and structured materials. The program is designed for grades 3–12. The content may be subject-oriented or interdisciplinary. Each teacher selects the themes best suited for his or her students. The length of the program may vary from 2 to 5 days and is offered year round.

☐ **Yes,** I want to receive your free Information Pak.
☐ Yes ☐ No Telephone me one evening to explain the program.

Name _____ ( ) School Phone _____

School _____ ( ) Home Phone _____

School Address _____ My Subject _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Grade Level _____

Mail to: Earth Shuttle, The Carter Co. of Boston, Inc., 11 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

For FREE catalog call 1-800-237-0046 In Mass. call 617-723-3060

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